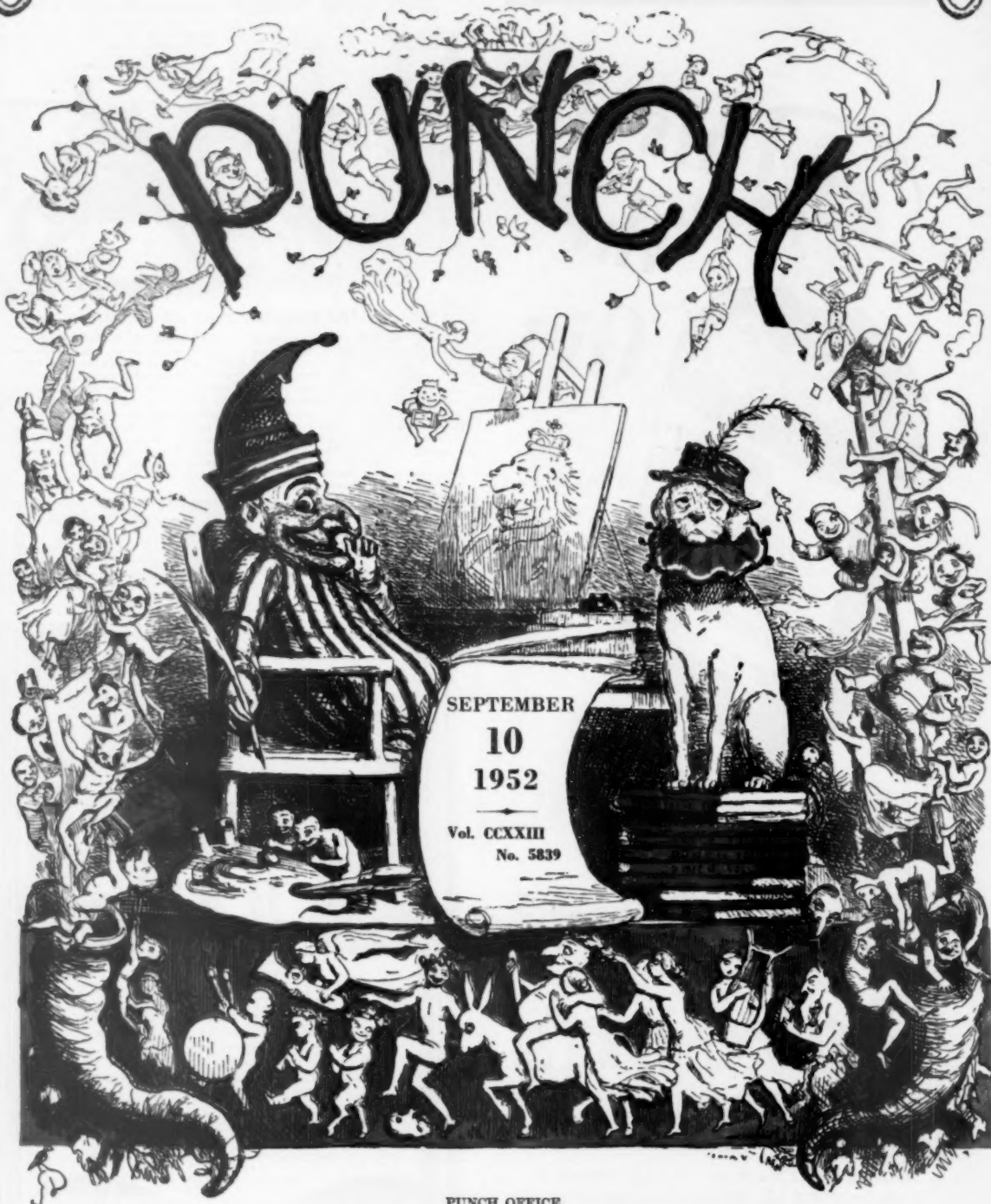


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Did you know

a riderless horse can win a race?



In the Palio races at Siena in Italy a riderless horse can win on its own. On one occasion a lady spectator overlooking a dangerous turn, leaned over and pulled a jockey off his horse by the hair: despite this the horse went on alone and won the race!

The toughest race on earth

These races are probably the toughest in the world. Run since 1656 for the possession of a sacred banner called the Palio, they cause bitter rivalry between the various districts who enter riders. Assaults, doings and the bribery of grooms and jockeys are a normal occurrence. Knives are drawn and men may die on Palio day. The course usually takes only 1 minute, 10 seconds. The barebacked

jockeys circle the piazza three times, using their whips as deadly weapons, viciously laying into all the other riders and horses within range. It is unusual for more than three or four jockeys to finish the race. When the winner pulls up, friends, enemies and carabinieri rush on to the course and chaos reigns supreme. Afterwards there is a thanksgiving service, a feast for the winner and a grand parade of the horses. Then and only then does peace return to Siena.

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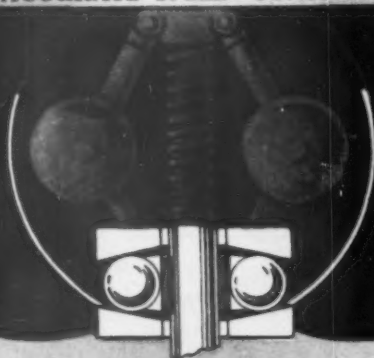
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The transition from raw material to industrial rubber, both natural and synthetic, is a complex process. Here, as in so many other industrial processes, chemicals from petroleum play their part, and Shell maintain rubber research laboratories at Thornton for this particular study. DUTREX R, a Shell product, is a softener and processing aid, made in Britain. Besides contributing to the tensile

strength of the compound, DUTREX R gives the finished rubber greatest tear resistance with less abrasion loss, less flex cracking and lower crack growth. For the layman who may find such technical terms obscure, this means in plain words, greater durability and better value, whether it be in tyres, tubes, anti-vibration pads or any of the hundred and one other items for which high-quality rubber is essential.



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The Scotch Liqueur for great occasions!

RONALD MORRISON & CO. LTD. EDINBURGH

POWERLESS GENIUS—*Leonardo da Vinci* (1452-1519)

Though Leonardo da Vinci was able to transform the philosophers' dreams into the exactitude of mechanical drawings, he was unable to foresee any source of power other than gravity, water power and human muscle.



The soaring imagination behind Leonardo da Vinci's helicopter was frustrated by the tug of gravity and the grip of friction. To overcome the one, power was needed; to overcome the other, lubricants. It was not until nearly three centuries later that man began to utilise the power that lies in coal; and yet another century passed before he began to exploit the tremendous resources for power and lubrication that lie in mineral oils.

In 1866—at the start of the oil epoch—Vacuum Oil Company was founded. Vacuum's pioneer work on oils for fuels and lubricants has greatly helped many of Leonardo da Vinci's visions to become the commonplace of this mechanical age.

PIONEERS IN SCIENTIFIC LUBRICATION

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Good Scotch Whisky is the friendliest of all spirits, mellow, kindly stimulating, a smoothly satisfying drink for all occasions. Its superlative merit is due to the unique virtues inherent in its production which cannot be imitated, and the scrupulous care taken in its blending and maturing by the great distillers of Scotland. No stick to Scotch—and give it a name . . .

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ask for

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NO FINER WHISKY
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PERFECTOS

EXCLUSIVE CIGARETTES BY
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P.O. 56 Issued by The Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Great Britain and Ireland), Ltd.

"See what I'm driving at"



"It's the man who likes driving for its own sake who makes the best driver" said the Colonel.
"And there are fewer and fewer of them. Modern cars don't encourage the breed."
"There's always the Riley" piped up the young engineer.
"That just proves my point" said the Colonel. "The Riley is still an individually built car. It's a car that rewards a good driver. That's why you'll find the man in the Riley is pretty well always a cut above the rest in driving skill."

Yes, indeed!



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2½ litre Saloon. 1½ litre Saloon.

RILEY MOTORS LIMITED, Sales Division, COWLEY, OXFORD.

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Meet MERVYN MARVEL

Like every fanatical topographer, Mervyn Marvel needs a strong, well-tailored envelope* to draw maps for his friends on. Mervyn loves to be asked the way. Sometimes he dreams he is a sign-post, and is sweet to Mrs. Marvel in the morning.



Before he shows you he tells you. "First left, third right, second left, down the street, up the hill, past the church, through the lights, bear left, fork right, round the pub, under the viaduct, over the bridge and you're there. Can't miss it." But you know different. You say "er—first right, third left . . . ?"

"No, no. Look, I'll draw you a map."

And he draws it, on an envelope, in a doorway, causing a crowd to collect. "It's only rough," he keeps saying. "It's not to scale. That bit really joins up with the other bit that's run off the paper." He breathes hard. He hums. He puts in shading. His pen keeps going dry at the side streets. Time passes. You're cold. He's happy. It's awful. When it's done, it looks like a psycho-analyst's doodle-

pad. You don't even know where you are, let alone where you want to be. And when you've thanked him and he's said it's nothing at all, and you've waited until he's out of sight, you sneak smartly into the nearest taxi. But don't show the taximan the map. A demented taximan is a very terrible thing...

But there you are—we all have a foible. Mervyn Marvel is a fanatical topographer, and needs a strong, well-tailored envelope to draw maps for his friends on.



There are several features that distinguish River Series from ordinary envelopes—their smart modern "Square Cut" appearance—all have generous gumming of flaps and wide overlap of seams to provide security—and all are made from British high-quality papers. Your local Stationer or Printer will readily arrange supplies.

River Series envelopes

THERE ARE OVER 260 different sizes and shapes of Manilla, Cream Laid, Air Mail, Cartridge and Parchment envelopes in the 'River Series' range.

* One of the RIVER SERIES for preference. A nice big Tes cartridge (say 15 x 10) would be just the mark for Mervyn, our fictitious topographer.

★ FREE SAMPLE BINDER

We shall be delighted to send to professional and business houses our newest sample binder of River Series envelopes. It will prove most helpful in deciding the best for every separate envelope requirement.

NAME _____

FIRM _____

ADDRESS _____



A magnificently decorated
vase, wrought in silver by
Adam van Vianen in 1610.

The van Vianen touch

First of a famous family of craftsmen, the brothers Adam and Paul van Vianen set, in the 17th century, a new style in decorative design which was to influence the work of goldsmiths and silversmiths throughout Europe. Their modern descendants have wider scope for their skill, for they can use palladium. Rarer than gold, this lovely metal is fashion's choice for beautiful settings of every kind—for inexpensive jewellery and luxurious suites alike. Ask your own jeweller about palladium.



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ST. LEGER



What are they talking about?

No, they're not talking about the last "Sale". They're talking about Burrough's Gin—because it is *triple distilled*. This means it undergoes three separate distillations ensuring the highest quality and absolute purity. It takes a little longer than other methods. But, it is effort well spent. For today, Burrough's Beefeater Gin, as always, is soft, smooth and wonderfully clean to the palate. Remember, it's *triple distilled*. Price 33/9 per bottle; 17/7 per half bottle.



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BURROUGH'S Gin

BEEFESTER

IT IS TRIPLE DISTILLED!

JAMES BURROUGH LTD., 75 CALD DISTILLERY, BUTTON ROAD, S.E.11



A.311

Modern style beautifully designed 15 jewel lever De Luxe watch with raised gilt alternate arabic and baton numerals. Chromium front and stainless steel back. Price £8.15.6 including P.T.



As right as my SMITHS watch

On the dot... that's the proud boast of Smiths de Luxe 15 jewel Watch owners.

Your Jeweller will show you how cleanly designed and beautifully finished

all models are, and will also vouch for the strict accuracy and reliability, because Smiths Watches are made in the worthy tradition of true British Craftsmanship. Every component is made to finest precision limits. Every watch has 16 day exhaustive timing test. Spring loaded bars on men's watches facilitate easy strap change. Wide variety of models. Men's Watches, chrome and stainless steel cases (including the famous 1215 range) from £7.15.0. Ladies' from £5.19.6. Gold cases from £23.10.0. Ladies' from £17.10.0.

Every watch is fully guaranteed and sold exclusively by Jewellers



B.300

One of the large variety of attractively styled ladies' 15 jewel luxury watches in chrome stainless steel back. Price £8.19.6 including P.T.

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15 JEWEL WATCHES

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OUT OF THE HANDS

You don't really need the harps on the damask to lull you to sleep—this lovely sprung divan with spring interior mattress is SO comfortable.

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Headboard to match EXTRA.

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Naughty Betty wouldn't eat Mother's nice new apple sweet. Mother racked her brains—no good—to make young Betty eat her pud, till a neighbour, kitchen-wise, told her of a nice surprise. Betty now eats sweets with glee "Monk & Glass," she says, "for me."

MORAL: Make all meals especial treats by serving Monk & Glass with sweets.



JELLIES TOO! Try Monk & Glass fruity Tobie Jellies. So easy and quick to make—and they always turn out a treat!

MONK & GLASS

jolly good CUSTARD

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saves your car...saves you money

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Ask your
Regent Dealer
about Havoline
...he knows how
good it is!

Havoline is the only Motor Oil with a name that's a recommendation in itself... it has been tested, proved and acclaimed by Motorists in the U.S.A. and 29 other countries.

Gentlemen Twins

—with a difference

ALGERNON follows-follows, on the left, and his brother Alistair are gentlemen twins. They look and think alike, behave very similarly, and both, let us admit it, suffer from the cold—which is where they differ.

For when Boreas blows, Algernon cloaks his plaintive frame in cumbersome clouts. Look at the result! Bulky! Definitely not well-dressed.

Alistair, however, when cold weather approaches, dons his elegant Braemar underwear. Its comfortable warmth preserves him from the cold, yet fits neatly beneath his suits. The result? Perfection! Better still, Braemar's two-ply reinforcement where it really counts allows him great flexibility of movement. And Alistair, a modern gentleman impoverished by taxes, appreciates that Braemar is a sound investment. It lasts a lifetime. Incidentally, for special elegance and warmth, Alistair wears a luxurious Braemar pullover.

Wise gentlemen everywhere are buying Braemar. They know it's the best in knitted underwear. All fully-fashioned and shrink resistant, Braemars are stocked at better outfitters, in pure wool, at prices from about £3.17.6d a set. The luxury garments, in pure wool, pure silk, or silk and wool, cost more but are worth it in the long run. So be comfortable—invest in Braemar.

Fully-fashioned underwear for men



BRAEMAR KNITWEAR LIMITED, HAWICK, SCOTLAND

buy
the
best bulbs—
plant them
NOW!





May we present...

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But in any important assembly of bottles there will be one which achieves distinction by quite other means. Quietly, reservedly dressed in a label which may not captivate, but which at once

commands respect. This is some dignitary, clearly. A grave and noble diplomat would have this manner.

It is a presence internationally known and honoured. This is White Horse, a nobleman among whiskies, mellow with years and tradition, with a heart that is generous and warm. Were a delegate chosen to represent the proud, kindly spirit of Scotland, there could be no appointment more welcome than White Horse.

WHITE HORSE Scotch Whisky

Limitless enjoyment
IF YOU WINTER IN
BERMUDA

Thank goodness there's still a heavenly spot on this distracted globe where Britons don't have to be paupers; a coral necklace of islands where the Gulf Stream wards off winter; where there's swimming and game-fishing all the year round, and Christmas comes in with scarlet Poinsettia; where you can ride and sail and dance under the stars, and the *dolce far niente* is just about the best in the world. Are you wintering in Bermuda?



HOW TO GET THERE

Bermuda is 700 miles S.E. of New York, in the latitude of North Carolina. B.O.A.C. will fly you there, either direct from London, or via New York taking advantage of the low tourist fare. Or you can sail direct by Cunard, which gives you a week of comfort in the *CARONIA*, sailing from Southampton December 10, or the *BRITANNIC*, from Liverpool, January 17. Frequent other services via New York.

BERMUDA'S CURRENCY IS STERLING. There is no limit on the amount you are allowed to take there. *Colours* of Bermuda available on loan—write to Publicity Officer, Bermuda Government Information Office, Regent House, 89 Kingsway, London, W.C.2, who will also send you free illustrated booklet and information about fares and hotel charges. Or ask your Travel Agent.

WHEN IN NEW YORK on business, why not take advantage of the nearness of Bermuda and enjoy a break there on the way home?

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MASTER**
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**OLD
ANGUS**
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*A Noble Scotch
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Made from the finest quality fur felt by craftsmen who have spent their lives in the hat trade, the Diplomat is hand-made, and close attention is paid to detail and finish. In black, romany brown, and dark grey.

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If you would know more about any of the policies outlined here, if we can provide information about any other particular policies or about insurance problems generally, pray make what use of us you wish. Our address is 1, King William Street, Department M.1 London, E.C.4.

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WEST GATE Supreme PIPES



The "West Gate" Supreme is a pipe with unusual characteristics. The carbonised bowl avoids the usual "breaking-in" process; the colour, quality and shapes will certainly appeal to you—and so will the price for the "West Gate" Supreme is still only 12/6.

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The sherry you offer reveals your taste and judgement. You of course know of "Bristol Milk" and "Bristol Cream" as two of the world's supreme sherries. Their price and scarcity, alas, at present preclude their being served regularly. But from the same famous cellars come other good sherries, more plentiful and at prices to suit the pocket for everyday use. This sample case enables you to compare six of these at your leisure and to select your preference for future use. Your hospitality will therefore be founded upon a sherry of distinction—Harvey's.



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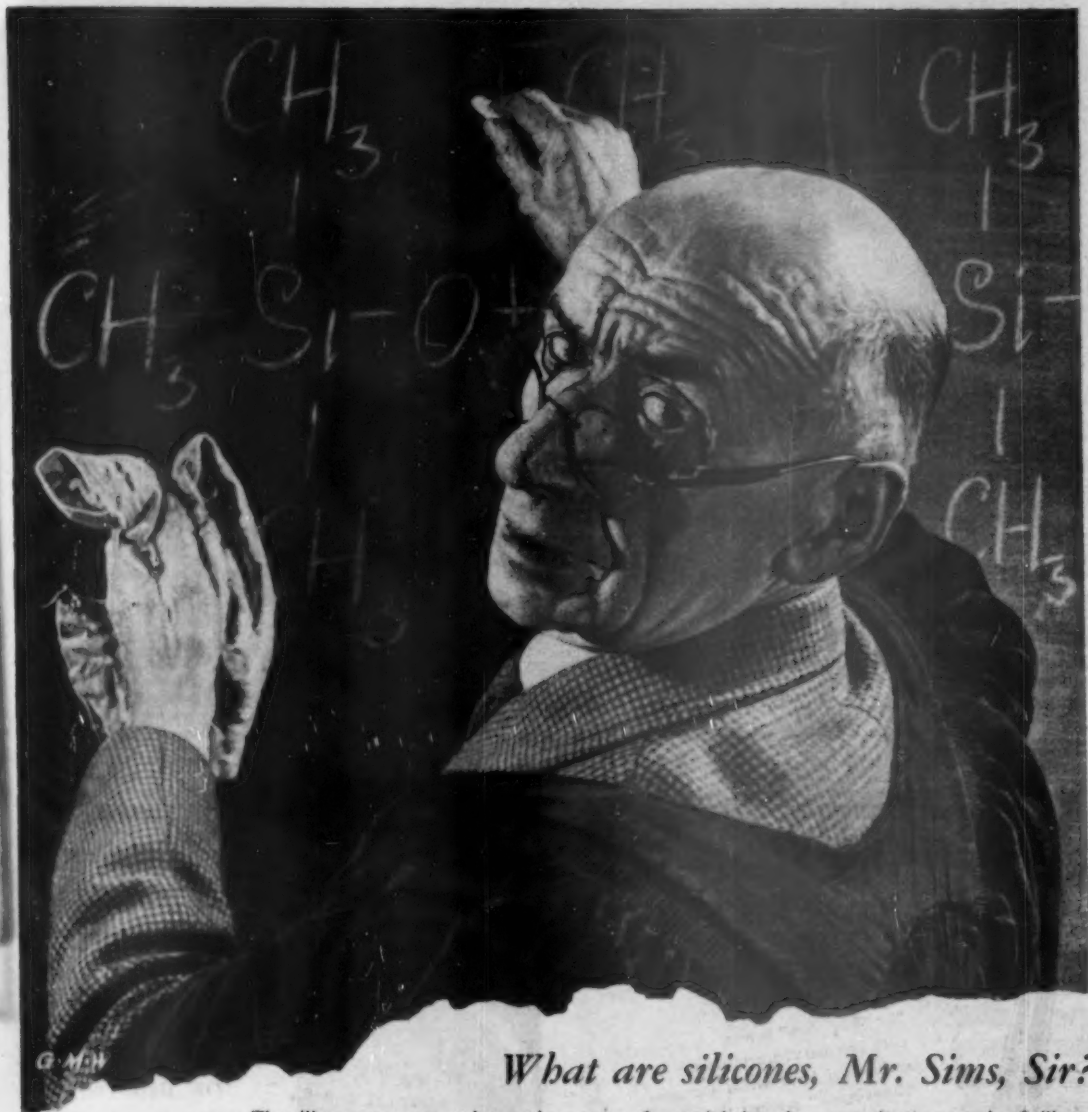
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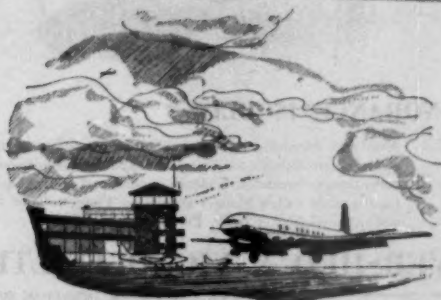
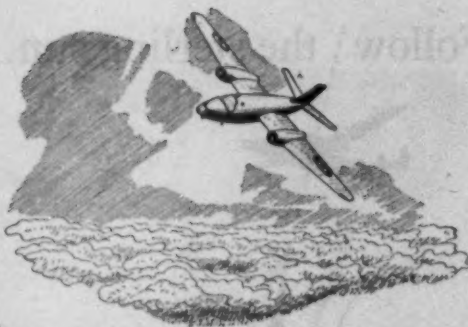
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Scruffy hair! blame DRY SCALP

End Dry Scalp
and look a new man!

Beware Sea and Sun!

Sun and salty air play havoc with hair and can lead to Dry Scalp. Get rid of it with 'Vaseline' Hair Tonic!

LOTS OF MEN accept unruly, dandruff-flecked hair as just one of those things. They're wrong! These are signs of neglected Dry Scalp.

You can end it with 'Vaseline' Brand Hair Tonic. Just massage in a few drops for 20 seconds every morning, moving the whole scalp. You'll find hair gets 'life' back into it, and stays tidy all day.

'Vaseline' Hair Tonic costs only 2/6d., or 4/3d. for double quantity. Buy a bottle today!



End Dry Scalp with 'Vaseline' Hair Tonic, and your hair will stay neat and tidy all day, even in summer breezes at the seaside.

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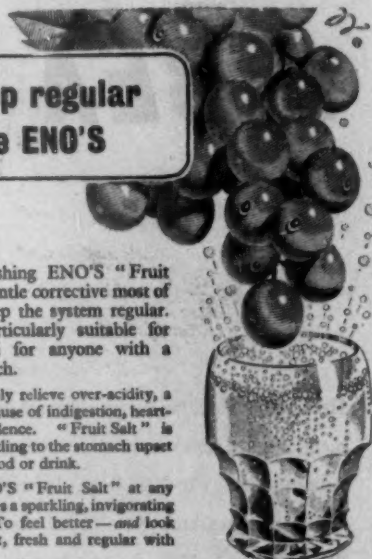


Vaseline* HAIR TONIC
THE DRESSING THAT ENDS DRY SCALP

* 'Vaseline' is the registered trade mark of the Chesebrough Mfg. Co. U.S.A.

(109-11)

To keep regular take ENO'S



Pleasant, refreshing ENO'S "Fruit Salt" is the gentle corrective most of us need to keep the system regular. ENO'S is particularly suitable for children—and for anyone with a delicate stomach.

ENO'S will safely relieve over-acidity, a most frequent cause of indigestion, heartburn and flatulence. "Fruit Salt" is soothing and settling to the stomach upset by unsuitable food or drink.

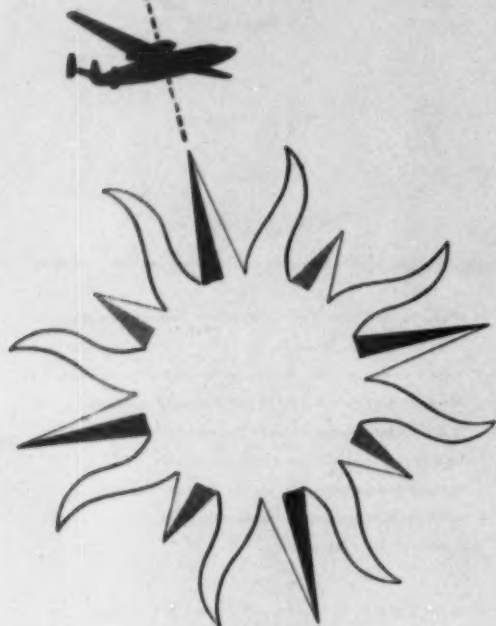
A dash of ENO'S "Fruit Salt" at any time of day makes a sparkling, invigorating health-drink. To feel better—and look better—keep fit, fresh and regular with your ENO'S.

Eno's 'Fruit Salt'

THE GENTLE ANTACID LAXATIVE

2/6d. Regular Size—Family Size (double the quantity) 4/6d.

Follow the sterling sun...



fly BEA south

to Gibraltar £66.9.0

to Cyprus £115.0.0*

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*Valid 23 days

Here in these Mediterranean places, there's no limit to the time or money you can spend under the sun. Fly there BEA. Information and bookings from your Travel Agent or BEA, Dorland Hall, 14-20 Regent Street, London, S.W.1. (Telephone GERrard 9833.)

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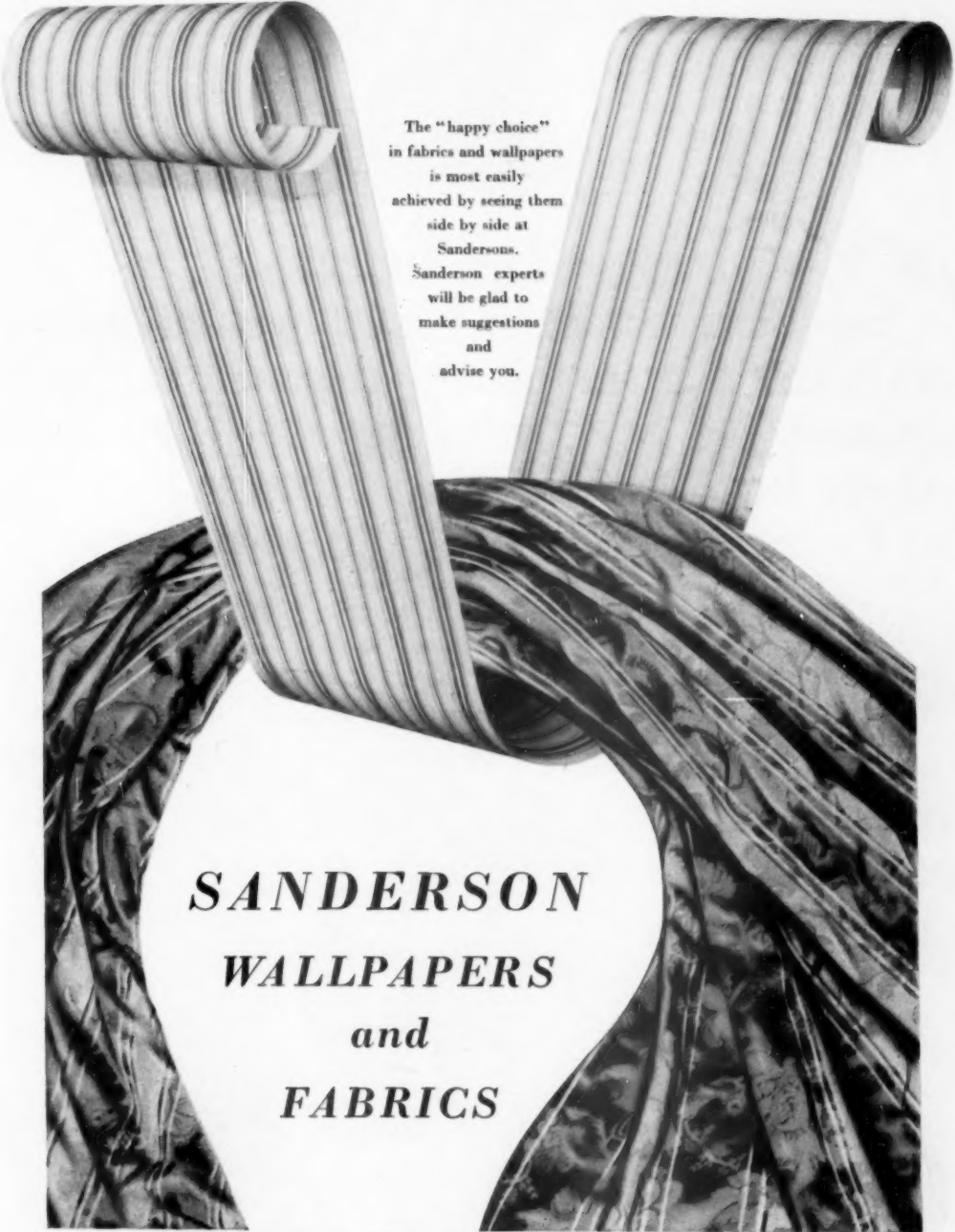
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Partridge potting
begins on the first, when
hostilities open also against
natives who are killed and
eaten by the dozen.



At Braemar capers are cut
and cabers tossed.
Ploughing
is in full swing.



With the season drawing to
an end, trout fishermen can
exaggerate



at leisure
while they

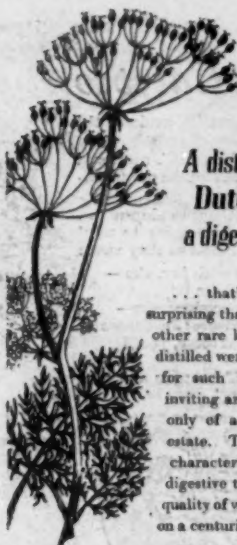
have a
Capstan



-they're made to make friends

SEPTEMBER BLOW SOFT TILL THE FRUITS IN THE

LOFT



SECRETS OF BOLS LIQUEURS.

*A distillate of finest
Dutch caraway seeds,
a digestive quite exceptional...*

... that's Bolskummel. It is not surprising that the caraway seeds (and other rare herbs) from which it is distilled were once used to pay taxes, for such intriguing flavour and inviting aroma are the birthright only of a liqueur born to high estate. They are in fact the characteristics of a delectable digestive the extra dry quality of which is based on a centuries-old secret.

BOLSKUMMEL

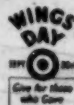
* The House of Bols was founded in Amsterdam in 1875 — over thirty years before Ben Hur was born.
Other Bols liqueurs include Apricot Bols, Cherry Bols and Dry Orange Curaçao.



DOWCESTER CREAM

The Sherry Superb

SOLE IMPORTERS: GALE LISTER & CO. LTD., LEEDS 2



Daylight costs nothing

Make the most of it

in the new Housing Estate with

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WILLIAMS & WILLIAMS

Metal Window Division of WILLIAMS & WILLIAMS LTD., Reliance Works, Chester



Cruise Calypso

"Isn't this heaven!" exulted the Unicorn.

"Jamaica, I understood", answered the Lion. "Fourth stop on our Caribbean cruise."

"Here come the Calypso singers . . . Good Lord, they're singing to us!" said the Unicorn. And so they were:

"We greet you with joy, sirs—
our banjos proclaim it!
We're British ourselves, sirs—
what's your pleasure? Just name it!
Our sunshine's a tonic, you'll
fancy our rum—
Yes, we've GOT bananas and you
shall have some."



"Very civil of them", said the Lion. "Oughtn't we to reply?" So the Unicorn borrowed a banjo and they improvised:

"Our Cruise Ship's a dream ship!
What joy the cuisine!
How delightful the isles of the
blue Caribbean!
As for Christmas at sea—oh,
it's warm and it's jolly;
Poinsettias for us, please—
away with your holly!"

The applause was tremendous but the Unicorn looked a little guilty. "Surely we ought to say a bit more about the Empress of Scotland?" he whispered. "After all, we wouldn't be here but for her." The Lion nodded and they gave voice again:

"Our Cruise Ship's a dream ship—
have we said that already?
She's the Empress of Scotland,
she's most beautifully steady.
Yes, for sun and for fun
and for luxury terrific
Come cruising, come Winter—
come Canadian Pacific."

Southern Cruise to the Caribbean
by the EMPRESS OF SCOTLAND
Sailing Liverpool 16th December
Southampton 18th December
and calling at Cherbourg
Returning to Southampton
19th January 1953

See your authorised agent or

Canadian Pacific

Trafalgar Square W.C.2. (Whitehall 5100)
103 Leadenhall Street E.C.3. (Avenue
4707) LONDON and offices throughout
Britain and the Continent.



IT is understood that the contractors employed on the new truce-talks building at Panmunjom were specialists in doors that won't quite shut.

Garnering and presenting world news is no light task in these eventful times, and the tirelessness of our daily Press in giving its readers the clearest possible pictures was again exemplified in the *Daily Express* front page reports of the floods covering a square mile of Belfast, when, in addition to an even more than usually detailed account of the occurrence, including the full names of a District Officer of the Belfast Fire Brigade and an incidental mention of fish being blown ashore at Seaford, Sussex, an aerial photograph of the City of London was thrown in, gratis, marked with dotted lines to show what a square mile would look like there, just before flooding on a comparative scale took place, if it ever did.

"An Order effective on August 11 and published to-day makes it no longer necessary for an employer advertising for workers to say that applications must be made to an employment exchange or scheduled employment agency.

It will be sufficient to say that the engagement must be made through a local office of the Labour Ministry or a scheduled employment agency."—*Daily Dispatch*

Now you're talking.

The American Press has made enthusiastic references to the Canberra's double crossing of the Atlantic. "Our applause to the British . . . valiant and skilful crew . . . a new triumph . . . Whoosh! . . . flashed across the Atlantic . . ." and much more on the same lines. Nor has Wing Commander Beamont himself kept silent. He said: "We had a very nice trip."

"OTTAWA, Aug. 22. Further preparations have been made for the construction of the St. Lawrence seaway. The special products branch of the Department of Transport . . . will prepare plans for submission to an international joint commission in support of the application by the Government of Canada for approval of the St. Lawrence power development project."—*The Times*

It's obviously going to be one of those usual channels.

Jealous of publicity given to safety precautions for travellers by air, a British Railways official has asserted that the traveller by train is just as thoughtfully looked after. The latest innovation is a warning to tighten his belt before entering the dining-car.

The suggestion by the Minister of Materials, Lord Swinton, that a "League Table" on the lines of the Football League should be drawn up to record the



progress of firms producing for export, gives the second hint recently that sport is getting a footing in Whitehall. It comes hot on the heels of the announcement that a paper summarizing the findings of a Government research unit is to be entitled "The Development of a Numerical Scoring System for the Sensory Assessment of the Spoilage of Wet White Fish Stored in Ice."

Some apathy on the part of the British public over Dr. Jean Piccard's offer of a 1954 flight to Mars at a fare of £89,000 is thought to be due to Government vacillation in issuing an adapted ruling on the £25 travel allowance.

The Radio Show has come and gone, earning praise in plenty on all sides. Some disappointment

has, however, been caused in the offices of *The Star*, which offered, during the Show's run, television sets as prizes for the best essay on "If I Were Chief of the B.B.C." Right until the last it was expected that an entry would come in from Sir Alexander Cadogan.

The successful experiment with cricket by floodlight has provoked excited discussion among Association football enthusiasts. They feel that next year, with any luck, the creation of artificial cold, mist and mud will at last enable football to bridge that execrating hiatus between June and the end of August.

"The new telephone exchange to relieve the Welbeck Exchange in the Baker Street area will be called Tyburn if public reaction is favourable."—*A news item*
Sorry you've been tumbled.

FOOTWEAR

I HAD no intention, when I went up to London the other day, of buying a pair of shoes, but I met Symphon in Piccadilly Circus, gleamingly shod.

"I've just bought them," he said, looking down with pride at the shining toe-caps, "at a little shop round the corner. Export rejects at a bargain price."

Glancing down at my shoes I was grieved to see how senile they looked. It is with shoes as with men. They pass so imperceptibly from youth to age that those who live with them every day hardly notice what has happened.

"I was going to ask you to come with me to the cinema," said Symphon, "but the thought of walking through the vestibule with a man wearing shoes only fit for a jumble-sale appalls me. Those things you've got on will fall apart at any moment, so why not replace them cheaply while you've got the chance?"

He took me to the little shop round the corner, and I sat down in a chair and a man pulled off my old shoes with an expression of ill-concealed disgust, and measured my foot and told me that I was nine-and-a-half.

"Nine," I said. "I've always been nine."

"Nine-and-a-half," he said brusquely. I did not like his tone.

"He's right," said Symphon. "I'm nine-and-a-half myself, and when we were together in the War I often borrowed your shoes, which I couldn't have done if you'd worn nines . . ."

I am a fairly good-tempered man as a rule, but I am not prepared to be dictated to about the size of my feet, and I left the shop five

minutes later wearing a smart pair of black nines.

Symphon had free tickets for *Come Hither, Lucy* at the Rostoria. I have met quite a lot of people since who were pleased with the film, but I did not enjoy myself at all. We arrived in the middle, and I was still trying to sort out the characters when I became aware that both feet were becoming red-hot. The only hope of relieving my agony was to remove the shoes, but I had to do it without letting Symphon know what was going on, because I did not want to give him the chance of reviving his absurd theory that I was a nine-and-a-half.

I managed to unlace them by firmly gripping each knee in turn and raising it high enough to jerk the end of the lace with the other hand, but wriggling them off was a long job, and by the time I had got them both off the film had come to an end and another film, which Symphon said he did not think much of, had started.

"Let's give it a chance," I said, quietly wriggling one of my feet back into a shoe, "it may get more exciting in a minute."

It took me twenty-five minutes to get both shoes on again and



laced up, and I was only just in time.

"I can't stand any more of this," said Sympson, rising to his feet. "And if we go now we can just catch the five-fifteen home."

As we walked out through the vestibule we had to pass a long queue of people waiting for the cheaper seats. People in queues usually look rather glum, but this lot seemed full of the joy of life, and laughed heartily as we stalked by.

"Rather rude," said Sympson as we hailed a taxi, "the way they stared at us."

We crossed our legs in the debonair manner one does cross one's legs in taxis, and noticed for the first time that while I wore a brown export reject on my right foot and a black export reject on my left foot, Sympson wore a brown export reject on his left foot and a black export reject on his right foot.

D. H. BARBER



R. Vackel

"Pssst!"

AMATEUR DRAMATIC

"*THE woman is an impostor!*"

I hissed, sweeping my cloak round with a magnificent gesture. "LIES, ALL LIES!" I roared, banging on the table.

I couldn't resist a smirk of satisfaction. Got it! Perfect! Carefully controlled fury, building up to a terrible climax. Now...

But Sir Thomas, startled at the venom directed at his head, was fumbling with his script.

"Stop!" said Marion from the front row.

"Not so much force, Lord Hertford," she smiled anxiously. "Try to lie your part. You are trying to keep things under control, you must keep very calm, you are trying to reason with them."

"Oh!" I said, "I see."

I advanced to centre-stage. "The woman—is an IMPOSTOR!" I cried, lifting my hands to heaven.

"No, NO!" said Marion. "Quietly. The woman is an impostor. See? The woman is an impostor. Nice and easily. Re-

member you are desperately trying to save the life of Lady Katherine, your niece, now. You must calm them down. It wouldn't be any use losing your temper, would it?"

"No," I said.

Sir Thomas had found his place in the script and he turned to me with a sickening leer.

"By your leave, milord Hertford, but I still have another witness to bring."

I smiled. Weak, very weak. The man had no idea. I should have had Sir Thomas's part, I could see that.

"Very good, Leslie," said Marion.

We all waited. "What's the use of protracting this miserable business!" she prompted gently.

I started. "What's the use of protracting this miserable business?" I said weakly.

"No, no," interrupted Marion, "with conviction; you are beginning to despair now, and this is your last chance."

"What's the use of protracting this miserable business?" I stormed at her.

Marion winced. "Well, that will do for now, anyway," she said. "Eight o'clock on Tuesday then. —Er, Hertford, I think we'll have to go over your piece again. You haven't quite got the idea yet. But of course, it's quite fair for a first attempt," she said sweetly.

"Now," she said when the others had gone. "You must take this very quietly now. From 'The woman is an impostor'..."

* * * * *

But still, I must say it went very well on the night. I stepped out on my cue with the supreme confidence of a man who knows he really lives his part.

"*The woman is an impostor!*" I hissed, sweeping my cloak round with a magnificent gesture. "LIES, ALL LIES!" I roared, banging on the table.

The audience thrilled...

MOSTLY BIVALVULAR

I KNEW a man who, when the early leaves began to fall and the first moon of ostreophagy set in, would invite three companions to lunch, and have a dozen oysters laid before each; but he chose his men carefully from amongst those who could not abide this supreme gift of the gods, so that he said to each in turn "I am so sorry, I forgot that you didn't like them," and they were constrained to busy themselves with the hors d'œuvres whilst he, sitting behind his rocky and ever-growing rampart, engulfed with ecstasy the glories of the deep. "For it would have seemed greedy," he would remark, "to have ordered forty-eight for myself alone."

The oyster is thought by many eaters to be a sedentary kind of fish, but how wrong they are. It is only in later life that the little ones become lethargic, and cease to roam. Any old Whitstable longshoreman, grizzled, tanned and tarred, will tell you that the young oysters swim actively for days on end by means of a protrusible ciliated cushion or *velum*, and his brother from Colchester will chime in, pointing out the enormous mortality that these infants suffer in their earlier and friskier days. They are like dust in the water, he says. The little sponges eat them. So do the marine worms, the sea-anemones and the starfish. So also presumably do bathers. It is a solemn thought that in suitable localities the unwary swimmer may swallow a hundred thousand or more oysters without noticing them before breakfast time. But shades of the prison house soon close above the tiny wanderers and they descend to their shaly bed, each having lost about a million brothers or sisters before finding a peaceful

anchorage. Brothers or sisters, I said. But that is not quite accurate. For the little oyster changes its sex, and every little girl becomes a little boy.

Such are the reflections which (together with innumerable quotations) throng through the glowing mind of the erudite epicure. But he thinks perhaps first and foremost of Julius Caesar, for it seems unlikely that but for British oysters that great man would have persisted in his efforts to conquer our fog-bound island and bring the benefits of Roman civilization, if any, to its shores.

Yet over Julius Caesar, says our Whitstable wiseacre, the true gastronome must shake his head, for the conqueror undoubtedly valued the oyster not more for its real beauty than for its worst disease, which is the miserable pearl. He dedicated a breastplate studded with British pearls to the Goddess of Love. Such dedications, in later centuries, have become exceedingly rare. But so, alas, year by year, has become the British oyster, himself or herself, whichever you will. Too often dredged, the delicate androgynous fails to find its stony harbourage and—all Odysseys over—settle down to its honoured and unselfish career.

Other facts about the life and death of the oyster may be briefly enumerated. They are not easily opened with swords. They shut their shells when they travel by train. They dislike diesel oil. They do not feed late at night or in the early morning. An eight-year-old oyster may have a million or more offspring in a season, but exhibits little or no parental love. Oysters are gregarious like man. The greenest are the best. They were eaten in the Neolithic age, but without bread and butter and vinegar. Mediaeval travellers, who frequently discovered trees upon which lambs and geese grew like fruit, never encountered an oyster tree. The largest number of natives eaten at one sitting by one man is unknown. Dearer and rarer they become; and for want of raw material it is doubtful whether my great book, *Confessions of an Ostreophile*, will ever see the light of day.

EVOR



"He insists that we're allowed to take back seven hundredweight of pottery duty-free."

1952

THE corn is cut, and the bales like a beaten army
Lie in the short shorn stubble under the scorching
sun;

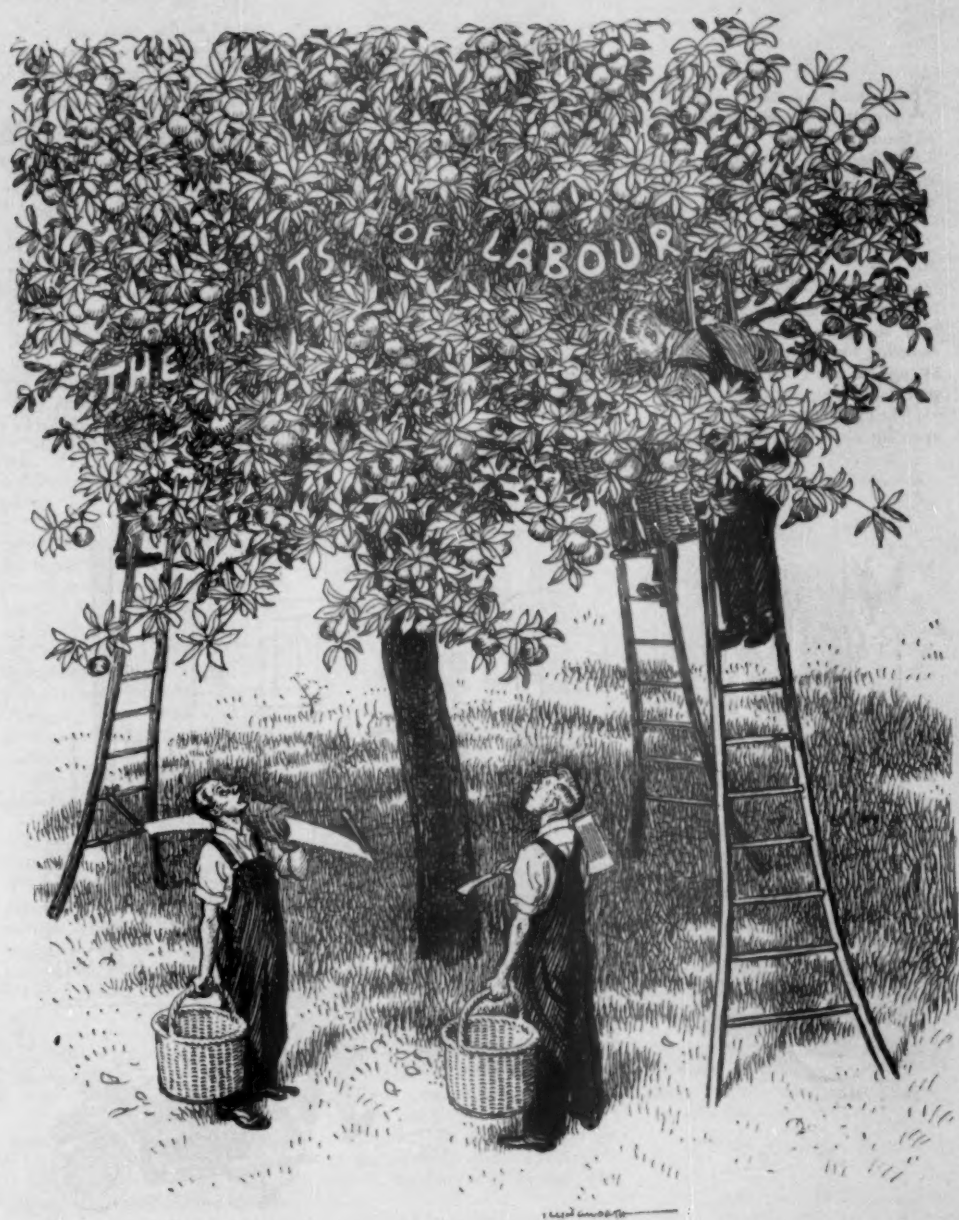
Harvest is nearly done.

Over the hill where the combine cannot go
The stocks march into the distance, row after row.

Next year the bales will have won,

And the sad superseded stocks

Will be spooks.



CAREFUL!

NUISANCE VALUE

"Is the appellant ratepayer present?" asked the Chairman of the tribunal.

"That's me," said Mr. Copping, standing up promptly at the bottom of the table.

The Chairman consulted his file. "You are conducting your own case, Mr. —"

"Copping," said Mr. Copping, helpfully. "I am." He tapped his own sheaf of papers, as though asserting his readiness to back his file against the Chairman's for any sum the latter cared to name.

The Chairman, about to embark upon the few reassuring words with

which he customarily put at their ease appellant ratepayers unsupported by professional advisers, took another look at Mr. Copping and decided that none would be needed. He referred to his papers again.

"As the owner-occupier of The Larches, a semi-detached villa-type dwelling house in Grafton Gardens, you are appealing against the present level of assessment on the grounds that it is excessive and unwarrantable. Your case rests on loss of amenity arising from progressive deterioration of the neighbourhood—"

"Precisely," said Mr. Copping.

"—since," the Chairman continued, "the establishment of the professional football club nearby."

Mr. Copping, finding that his first "precisely" had come too soon for maximum effect, said it again.

"Of what exactly does this deterioration consist, Mr. Copping?"

"It isn't the same road," said the appellant ratepayer bitterly.

"When I came to The Larches in 1921, a quieter, better-behaved, more select little turning you couldn't wish for. Loudest noise we ever heard was a dog barking at a canvasser. But now—" He broke off, shaking his head expressively.



"Where's the thirst?"

The Chairman looked for confirmation or rebuttal at the respondent valuation officer, who said coldly that when he had passed through Grafton Gardens half an hour earlier it had been comporting itself with reasonable decorum.

"On a Monday!" said Mr. Copping, indignantly. "Who's talking about Monday? On Monday it's licking its wounds. You should see it every other Saturday from September to May. Disgraceful! Dreads the winter coming, Mrs. Copping does."

"A little natural high spirits, nothing more," said the valuation officer. "The down-rating of a single hereditament on grounds of loss of amenity must conform to the test laid down in *McCorquodale v. Wuthersedge Assessment Committee* . . ."

"Natural high spirits!" interrupted Mr. Copping, brushing aside the legal flim-flam. "What about that little affair with the referee on January the ninth? Right outside my door!"

"Completely untypical," said the valuation officer, indignant in his turn. He appealed to the Chairman. "United had just had a perfectly good goal disallowed—in a cup-tie, mark you!"

The Chairman tutted sympathetically.

"It was so flagrant," said the V.O., groaning at the recollection, "that not only both linesmen, but, if you'll believe me, *the opposing captain himself*, begged him to reverse his decision." He read the scepticism in the Chairman's eye and turned sadly on Mr. Copping. "I give you January the ninth," he said.

"I think we must also give him his loss of amenity," said the Chairman.

* * * * *

"Reduction in rateable value from twenty-eight pounds to twenty-five," said Mr. Copping, triumphantly. "And complimented on the way I conducted my case."

"You're a caution," said Mrs. Copping, admiringly. "Now sit down and let me make you a nice cup of tea." She put the kettle on and began to get cups from the



"One can't really afford three great men in one century."

sideboard. At the same time she took a foolscap envelope from the mantelpiece and put it on the table in front of her husband. "Mr. Harris called while you were out and left this. He said he thought it would do very nicely."

"It's the draft letter he asked me to prepare," said Mr. Copping, importantly. "Once it gets known that one commands a nice turn of phrase, one's time is never one's own again." He drew the paper out of the envelope and scrutinized it closely for signs of alteration to his text.

"What have you said?" asked his wife, realizing that this was expected of her.

Mr. Copping cleared his throat and began to read.

"DEAR SIR,—As lifelong supporters of the United, we would ask you if you are satisfied with the present policy that is being pursued by the directors. Unless the practice of transferring promising players (Look at Burgess! What happened to Harper!) is stopped, and stopped rapidly, relegation is certain. Would you be satisfied with Third Division football at the Hummock? If not, join with us . . ."

"Italian, 25 years of age, employed research laboratory, London Brick Co., England, possessing technical diploma of Inferior Institute, desires position."

Hand Daily Mail

Well, modesty won't get him anywhere.



I Fourteen Hearts that Beat as One

As you halt at the guard-house for the French sentry to ask your business, probably in English, the flag of France is on the first flagstaff to your right. Beyond, in a quarter-circle, are those of Holland, Portugal, Turkey, Belgium, Canada and Denmark. The first pole on the left bears the flag of Norway, and beyond are Holland, Italy, Iceland, Greece, Great Britain and the U.S.A.

This apparently random, not to say partisan, sequence is no error; the flags are flown strictly in order of non-priority. France, as the host-nation, occupies her position permanently; for the rest, turn their names into French, substitute Luxembourg for the spare Hollander (the blue is a shade lighter: luckily the states have no common frontier and geographical considerations will usually distinguish the flags if chromatic ones fail), read them anti-clockwise, and they drop into alphabetical order—Etats-Unis, Grande Bretagne, Grèce, Islande, Italie, Luxembourg, Norvège, Pays-Bas . . . Each day they move along one place. They make a brave show and must be handy to remind forgetful staff officers just which nations they are helping to defend.

In the middle of them all, above the door, is the green-and-gold flag of Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers in Europe, SHAPE for short, without full-stops.

Anyone who recalls the palaceful of officers working for a mere Army Group headquarters at Caserta in 1944, or the way in which B.A.O.R. engulfed whole German towns with its manpower problems, may well be appalled when he tries to envisage a headquarters designed to co-ordinate the forces of thirteen

nations.* Confronted with the modest pre-fab erected for SHAPE in the sixty-acre farmland site near Versailles presented to N.A.T.O. by the French, "Is this," the newcomer asks suspiciously, "all?"

But SHAPE, like Sir James Barrie's island, likes to be visited; an omniscient lieutenant-colonel (British) of the Public Information Division will be delighted to demonstrate the contents of that flat stucco exterior.

In the big entrance-hall is a pen filled with French, British and American military policemen. "Vos cartes d'identité?" says one of the Americans, and you feel that here at last is the germ of true internationalism. This polyglot "snowdrop" in pounds your passport and issues instead a paper giving you the freedom of the 23,000 square feet of corridor. More frequent visitors get cards with their picture on them, which they wear in their buttonholes. "Well, what would you like to see?" the Public Information officer demands.

* No, not fourteen: Iceland hasn't got any forces.

"General Ridgway!"

It is a lucky day; General Ridgway has a Press conference in an hour's time. Meanwhile, if one could just get an idea how the place functions, how the Norwegian officers get on with French clerks, and so on? "Let's go into my office," the omniscient colonel suggests. "There's some tea coming up. Now it's perfectly simple——"



Only two languages are used officially at SHAPE, French and English. True, English has so much the best of it at the moment that one feels that perhaps a few French sub-titles might be enough; but in practice all documents are issued in both tongues, sometimes on the same sheet. Occasional relapses into trilingualism are noted regretfully, such as the waste-bins labelled TRASH—RUBBISH—ORDURES; but these are a healthy reminder that the battle of the North Atlantic will not be won on the playing-fields of Eton.

There is a rule that no office may be staffed by the same nation at all levels; a French colonel might have a Dutch major, a Danish captain and a Belgian clerk. General Eisenhower used to tell new arrivals that for the duration of their posting they were officers not of their own force but of the group; he himself, he said, was one-twelfth French, one-twelfth American, and so on. It must have been a wrench when he had to sacrifice one-eighty-fourth of each nationality to accommodate fourteenths of Turkish and Greek.

The suggestion, so dear to the nocturnal wielders of whitewash-brushes on both shores of the Channel, that SHAPE is American-dominated is quite false. True, of three hundred and sixty staff officers (at the time of writing) a hundred and sixty-five are American*; but there is a sound reason for this, as we shall see. Though the Commander is an American, his Deputy, Air Deputy and Naval Deputy are not; though the Chief of Staff is an American, neither of his Deputies is, nor are three of the five Assistant Chiefs of Staff who head departments.

The all-ranks strength of the headquarters is around a thousand, including attached, plus a French service battalion and a transport organization. For a staff whose terms of reference include the training of a dozen armies and the defence

*And, for the record, seventy-eight British, fifty-three French, twenty-one Italian, three Norwegian, one Luxembourgish.



of a Continent, this is hardly extravagant.

Anyway, America could not dominate SHAPE if it wanted to. War Departments cannot give orders to SHAPE, or take orders from it; it is responsible only to the Military Committee of the N.A.T.O. Council and commands only its own subordinate headquarters (one British admiral, one French admiral, one French marshal, one American



admiral, one American general). Communication between War Departments and SHAPE is through the National Military Representatives accredited at the headquarters from each nation—senior officers with something of the standing of ambassadors. (Indeed, the realistic Americans have appointed as Executive National Military Representative—functioning approximately as Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps—an experienced and peripatetic diplomat, Brigadier-General Anthony J. Drexel Biddle.)

But our tea is finished and the Press conference assembles.

The new Supreme Allied Commander is a general of a different stamp from his forerunner. His charm is altogether different from that of the friendly, smiling Eisenhower; he is the military campaigner rather than the political strategist, and he is clearly a man less accustomed to batteries of spotlights than

to batteries of artillery. He makes a quick, unassuming entry, puts on a mechanical smile for the cameramen, switches it off again as soon as he reckons they have it recorded.

Standing foursquare behind a plain, varnished desk, he reads a plain, unvarnished statement in an unemotional voice. He wears horn-rimmed glasses that soften slightly the strong lines of his face: dare we

hope that he will follow Mr. Churchill's advice to his predecessor and wave them in our face? But he grips his desk with both hands and makes no gestures at all. When question-time comes he removes his glasses and faces his inquisitors with the confident immobility of William Tell's little boy. His answers are short, positive and ready. The training of troops was better than he had expected. He considered two years the minimum useful period for national service. He thought the objectives fixed at Lisbon could be attained. He had had no dealing with the Yugoslavs. Then quite suddenly the dead-pan lightened, he became fervent, he wagged a forefinger even. Swiss neutrality, he said emphatically, was no obstacle to the defence of Europe, and he would like to pay tribute to the capabilities of the Swiss Army in the defence of Freedom.

Now what did that portend? Can that mercurial Field-Marshal, his Deputy, already have infected him with an enthusiasm for winter sports?

B. A. YOUNG

FEATHER YOUR NEST, SIR?

OUTSIDE my window, trying unsuccessfully to attract my attention, a cock sparrow stands upon a low brick wall. In his beak a long white fluffy feather flutters in the wind. He stands there with his panache, turning his head with small jerky movements this way and that, displaying every sign of cockiness and pride. He has been there several minutes, and in a few minutes more perhaps will fly up and insert the feather into his nest in the big magnolia. Perhaps, on the other hand—and from my observations this is the more likely—he will chirrup proudly, or yawn, or sneeze, and away will go the feather. Later on I shall look out again and there he will be once more, flaunting another feather. Another, I repeat exasperatedly, while the lost ones lie about and multiply like summer snowflakes on the grass.

Meanwhile, here we are in autumn and his nest, I suppose, is not yet finished.

Sparrows are like this, a perky, feckless race, and though I have always treated them with the

utmost consideration—kindness even—my patience with them is wearing pretty thin.

Under my roof a short beam sticks out to support a long diagonal timber that in turn supports the eave. In the spring a couple of sparrows took it into their heads to build a nest upon this beam. Like all these inefficient fowls, they went about it in the most untidy and laborious way with long and straggly bits of dead grass. Gradually they threw together a small loose haystack in the space between the beam and the sloping roof. In time the expected happened and I found the whole accumulation lying on the ground, while they twittered sadly overhead. It had grown too heavy to support its own weight and had fallen through.

Well, they had made one heap of all their winnings, and lost, and I won't say they never breathed a word about their loss, but they did begin all over again. In exactly the same way as before, but not with the same materials. The heap they had so painstakingly amassed

lay neglected on their doorstep, as it were, and they ranged far and wide for a fresh supply.

In a week the calamity was repeated, and after another week it happened again. By now the growing untidiness of the garden and a feeling of hopelessness were beginning to weigh on my own spirits, and I took action on behalf of my childish lodgers.

At some personal inconvenience I set up a ladder, removed their latest pitiful foundations and replaced them on a thin board that I had cut to fit on the top of the beam and fill the space. I then recovered as much of their own debris as seemed to me to be necessary, fashioned it into a snug and tidy nest and fixed it firmly in position.

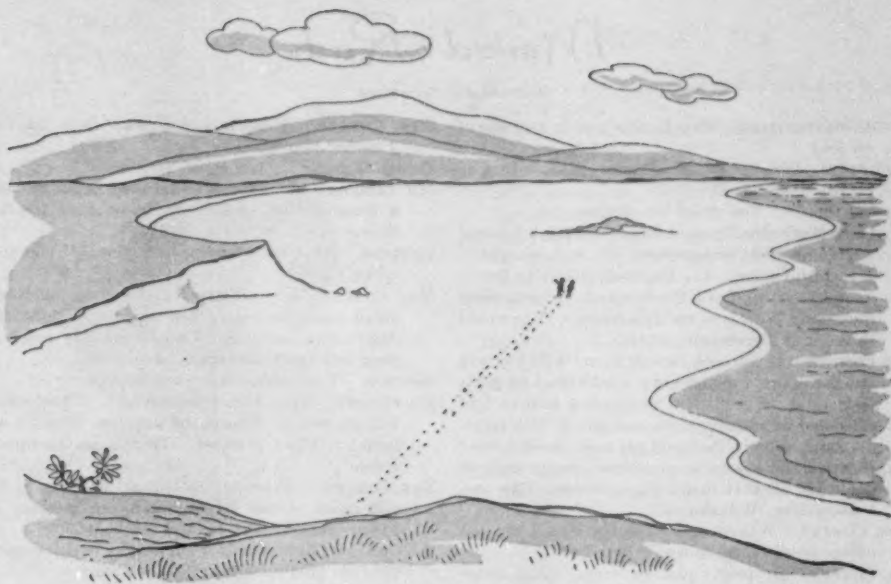
While I was doing all this they watched me from a tree a few feet away, hopping agitatedly from twig to twig and carrying on a continuous excited chatter at the tops of their voices.

When I had put away the ladder I came back to see, and found them already happily occupied about their new and—if I do say it myself—superior home. What is more, I am able to report with pleasure and satisfaction, not wholly unmixed with pride, that they laid eggs and brought up a family that was almost certainly the first in all this neighbourhood to fly away.

The trouble is that evidently the grateful parents put the word about; and ever since I have noticed sparrows, like the one I complain of now, hanging about near my windows with beakfuls of straw or leaves or feathers, not getting on with the job of nidification at all but doing all they can to draw attention to themselves.

Well, I know that sparrows are bad at building, and that I can do their work better than they; but until they make some contribution to the Welfare State I see no reason why they should expect to reap its benefits. After all, they are not foreigners.





"That's what I like about this spot, one doesn't see a soul . . .



. . . for hours."

Masked Revels

A Dramatic Fragment

LORD CHESTERFIELD. May I press you to partake of an ice?

DIOGENES. Try her with a cream-puff. They're proper rich and all.

GEORGE ELIOT. You great big glutton, you.

HOSTESS. Before the Thought-Readers, I think I should announce the engagement of my daughter, Hyacinth-Ginger, to Prexwell, the—I fear—*(Sympathetic murmurs.)* younger son of Lord Breckington. You would ease things by clapping them.

MR. COMPER. If you look closely at my wife you will see she is not a woman one would trust to get a code right. I will now swathe her face in fold after fold of mummy cloth and top off with serge.

AURUNGEKERE. Surely she could get a divorce for this?

MR. COMPER. It has to be persistent cruelty and we don't get all that many engagements. Can you see anything, Wilhelmina?

MRS. COMPER. Whenever I close my eyes I see red polygons waltzing slowly. Bunny-kitten.

MR. COMPER. My pretty prattler, relax. Will somebody write a quotation on this card?

GRACE DARLING. There. I hope it doesn't matter its being anonymous?

MRS. COMPER. I can't read Greek. It's not fair. I'm the home-builder type.

GRACE DARLING. Poor show, poor show.

MR. COMPER. Fair play, she did once begin to build a home for us but she got bored after the first floor.

HOSTESS. What am I holding in my hand? You keep quiet, Comper.

MRS. COMPER. In your right hand you are holding a small moth you have just caught; I think it's *Smerinthus ocellatus*. There's nothing much in your left hand but grains of snuff.

HOSTESS. You missed the watering-can.

MR. COMPER. When I have got the back off this watch I'll ask you to tell me the number. Broken my knife! I'll get a chisel. There's an inscription inside.

MRS. COMPER. "Presented to Michael Faraday by his colleagues of the Royal Society in memory of happy times at Dieppe and elsewhere."

MR. COMPER. Not bad. It's "unusually happy times." Can you lend me a snapshot, madam?

JOAN OF ARC. Mademoiselle, please!

MR. COMPER. What does this snapshot show?

MRS. COMPER. That men who look like ant-eaters shouldn't sunbathe.

JOAN OF ARC. You know, I think you're right. Would a moustache improve him?

MRS. COMPER. Only if large enough to obscure.

HOSTESS. Give them a farewell clap. I stipulated there should be no encores. Band, erase the memory.

CONSTANCE KENT. I dote upon The Lancets. They transport me into a Faëry world where sunbeams join hands with dewdrops and the Canterbury bells tinkle, tinkle, tinkle.

SIR HENRY IRVING. That is as may be.

A BASHI BAZOUK. Now me, I'm a great one for Ruby M. Ayres. I flatter myself that I have the largest signed collection of her books in the country.

ABELARD. I grant you that her yarns are entralling, but for atmosphere give me Henry Green. Oh, bosh it! Square dancing!

CALLER. One, two, three . . . one, two, three.

HOSTESS. That's not Square, it's Triangular. You're fired. Let the second part of the Entertainment be unleashed at once.

CONJURER. When I was living among the remoter tribes of Pakistan I was initiated into many a secret.

HOSTESS. The Agency said you did tricks. Are you, instead, a travelogue?

CONJURER. I am generally hired for my patter; but if you want it cut I shan't mind. Saves wear and tear on the prompter. Trick one: I turn this umbrella into a parasol. Done. Trick two: I



"I'm terribly sorry to lose you, Larkin, but, you understand, it's the paper shortage."



put the snooker ball into this box and vanish it.
Done. Trick three . . .

HOSTESS. Don't go so fast. My guests are not yet convinced that it *was* a snooker ball, in the sense that, say, Joe Davis would use the term.

CONJURER. You are the hardest employer to please I've had since I was the hind-legs of a kangaroo in "Beauty and the Beanstalk" at Sandhurst.

VELASQUEZ. I dare you to produce a squirrel out of my skull-cap.

CONJURER. Red or grey?

HOSTESS. Try not to quibble. If you must, don't quibble so monosyllabically. It gives my guests a feeling of baldness that the party can ill afford.

CONJURER. Faugh! (*He disappears in a puff of smoke.*)

VELASQUEZ. He was scared of being shown up by me. Charlatan!

HOSTESS. Let us forget him in the wild enchantments of the polka. This is Liberty Hall; we changed the name from "Shanklin."

BAND LEADER. The only tune we've got left is "March of the Men of Harlech." I don't mind if you polka to it. I'm not Welsh.

FINIS

R. G. G. PRICE

"Serial No. 29. Orders by Colonel L. T. Ride, C.B.E., E.D., Commandant, Royal Hongkong Defence Force.

FORCE ORDERS

Discipline—Dress. The practice of carrying umbrellas when in uniform is irregular and will cease."

South China Morning Post

Air umbrellas will, however, be provided if necessary.

MORNING TEA

THE brewing of China tea at half-past-four in the morning

(In a windless summer morning), is an act of mystical delight.

The skies are pure and pallid, the trees are unfamiliar. The house daylit but deserted; and the endless horror of the night

Suddenly swamped in a wave of clarity and exaltation: The eyes of the mind are wide, but the brain is sterilized and numb.

The mind seems poised on the brink of the answer to the ultimate question;

But nothing but the tea will come.

And the tea contains no answer, but takes the edge from the question.

Dulling the spiritual splendour, but soothing and softening the mind,

Till the halo round the head is a glow in the pit of the stomach,

And the muscles of the eyes relax: and you unexpectedly find

There are two more hours of silence before the world reawakens;

A third of the night is left; and it may conceivably be Possible to sleep for a little before the moment for the making

Of the ordinary morning tea. P. M. HUBBARD



M. Parkes

HELPING HAND

"WHAT a lucky thing," my mother said, "that I should come to spend a few days with Aunt Dora in London just when you are going on holiday. Here I am, helping you to pack, and tomorrow I shall be able to see you off."

"Quite a coincidence, isn't it?" I said.

"Yes," my mother said. "There are lots of things I forgot to say when I wrote that I shall be able to say now."

"Yes," I said.

"I'm glad you are going to Italy on the tour after all," my mother continued, "and not hitch-hiking round Spain with a billy-can. I am only surprised you are not going to Malaya. What a good thing I am helping you—I have never seen such a mess. What on earth is this?"

"My swim-suit," I said.

"Oh," my mother said.

"What are you doing?" I cried. "What is that you're putting in?"

"Your hot-water bottle cover," my mother said. "You weren't going to use your hot-water bottle without it, were you? You'll burn yourself. I wish you would try to be sensible. Whatever would you do if you burned yourself on a hot-water bottle in Italy?"

"I'm not taking either of them," I said.

"Yes, you are," my mother said. "You must be prepared. Leave your mackintosh till the last."

"I'm not taking my mackintosh to Italy," I said.

"Yes, you are," my mother said. "Now, I've folded all your blouses. Don't lose the tissue paper because of Christmas presents. How naaty you smell—what is it?"

"Les Fleurs de l'Amour," I said. "Bob gave it to me."

"Bob?" my mother cried. "Who's Bob? I've never heard of

Bob. What does he do, where does he live, why—?"

"You're standing on my things," I said.

"What! Good heavens," my mother said, "I thought it was tissue paper. Do you mean you wear these?"

"Yes."

"Well," my mother said. "They're not like mine, I can tell you. Have you packed iodine?"

"Yes," I said.

"And sticking-plaster?"

"Yes."

"And a bottle of ink?"

"Yes."

"And a bottle of disinfectant?"

"Yes," I said.

"You haven't," my mother said. "I know you haven't."

"Yes," I have."

"No, you haven't. You'll be stranded in Italy and I shan't be able to do anything about it. Still, I suppose somebody on the tour will be able to help you. A tour is a wonderful relief to me, taking you about and looking after you and making you enjoy yourself. I'm glad, though, that I shall meet the friend you are going with. Do you like her?"

"Yes," I said.

"That's good," my mother said. "Write to me as soon as you arrive, won't you? I was going to give you a stamped postcard to send me, but I realized it wouldn't be any good."

"No."

"Because," my mother continued, "if anybody kidnapped you they would just post the card themselves, wouldn't they?"

"Yes," I said.

"Well, we seem to have finished," my mother said. "What a pity you have to take two suitcases." "I was planning to use only one," I said. "But as it has turned out, I am taking far more things than I intended."

"Then," my mother said, "it's lucky that I am here to help you with it all."

MARJORIE RIDDELL



"If you don't pay attention, how do you expect to be able to make sand pies like daddy when you grow up?"



SUMMER EVENING IN PERSHORE

A MIRROR'S span the Avon lies,
Sprinkled with stars between
the reeds
Where, caught in the reflected skies,
The long-legged ghosts of languid
flies
Float down like thistle-seeds.

Drops tremble on the leaning oars.
Like moving air the water steals,
Gentle and dark, by steps and doors,
Through bridges hooped to secret
floors
Quilted with mud and eels.

Pale, moonlit plums with pearly
skins
Dangle, like earrings, from the
wall.
So delicately twilight spins,
Where water ends and night begins
Is told by a plum's fall.

O. D.

THE AUTHOR REGRETS



"Yes, dear, with the teenagers at home



one does



read



no pick up



their



ways."

A READER has rightly taken me to task for a confident statement I made not long ago in these pages declaring that Franz Hals' "Laughing Cavalier" was originally commissioned by Dumas as a dust-jacket for *The Three Musketeers*. My correspondent doubts this, and the point on which he bases his argument is that the lives of Hals and Dumas failed by many years to overlap, the former dying in 1666, the latter being born in 1803. Reference to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* confirms the quibble.

Many a writer would try to bluster it out, casting doubts on the accuracy of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, or trying to put the blame on the compositors. Such is not my way, for fearlessness has ever been the keynote of my writings. I can only apologize for my little slip. I received the story from a hitherto reliable news-agency and it was published in good faith. I should, of course, have checked up on it first, but the reader will appreciate that a busy journalist's life is one long rush with the printer's devil forever at his elbow waiting for the "copy." Pause to verify, and all too often one misses the edition.

This is the first time that a news-agency has betrayed me, although I must confess to having been misled by a well-known firm last winter, when I was reporting the M.C.C. tour of India from my offices in Hampshire for a paper in Bombay. The fault in that case, however, was entirely my own. Hastily scanning a cable in a London daily giving the chosen eleven for a match the following day, I failed to allow for the by-line. In my article I named

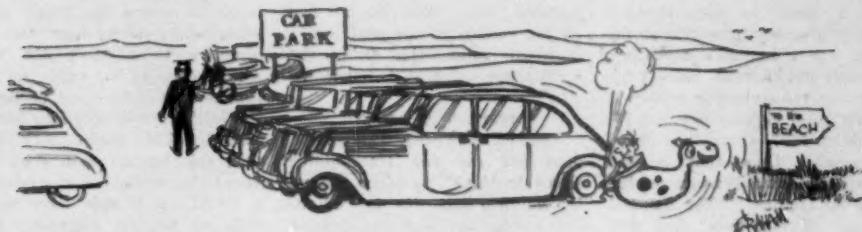
Reuter as twelfth-man, and even, when a player was injured during the game and a substitute came on, went so far as to praise Reuter's keen fielding and smart returns.

If only our readers appreciated our constant fight against inaccuracy! Yet, ironically enough, inaccuracy in other professions is richly rewarded. Thousands of pounds are to be made out of a single faulty postage-stamp that the proof-reader should never have passed in the first place. A penny turned out by the Mint with, say, a small reproduction of Epstein's "Rims" stamped on the reverse instead of the more customary Britannia becomes an instant object of curiosity and value.

No such golden harvest awaits the author who nods. Even Homer made nothing out of it except a reputation for fallibility. Years ago I published a book in which I alluded—and in glowing terms too—to the magnificent avenue of elms lining Cheltenham Promenade. Subsequent events proved that the trees in question, far from being elms, were in point of fact chestnuts, but is that book of mine worth thousands of pounds a copy to-day? It is not.

In the case of the "Laughing Cavalier" gaffe, let it not be thought I am trying to curry favour with my critic when I openly praise him for his courtesy and consideration in writing privately to me, instead of making me a laughing-stock by selling the unfortunate paragraph to some journal to reprint as a laughable "bull." Now I think of it, I rather wish this was what I had done myself.

COLIN HOWARD



THE COSMIC MESS

NOT long ago this column complained of the tiresome difference between English (and American) land (or "statute") miles (1760 yards), and "nautical" miles (2026 yards), and wondered why we must have both. One of the uncountable readers has kindly sent it Volume V, Number 3, of the *Journal of the Institute of Navigation*, with a learned and attractive article on *Early Units of Measurement and the Nautical Mile* by Commander Alton B. Moody, U.S.N.R. Let everyone, therefore, stand by for information. But this week, in order to keep its uncountable readers awake, this column will adorn itself with imbecile "cross-headings" after the fashion of our great dailies.

FAINTEST NOTION

The Commander tells us some fascinating things about the ancient units of measurements which still, no doubt, are a trouble to the student young and old. This column, for example, never had the faintest notion what was meant when the ancient Greeks "*marched ten parasangs*." But "*the parasang survives to-day*," says the Commander, "its modern value being 3.37 nautical miles." So ten parasangs would be nearly 40 (land) miles, not a bad walk. (Note that this column has had to do a sum—probably wrongly—to turn nautical into land miles. But how ridiculous!)

ARE YOU CONSCIOUS?

Then read on. The "cubit" also used to baffle this infant column. Originally, it seems, "it was taken as the length of the forearm, from the elbow to the end of the middle finger." It

varied from country to country. "The usual ancient Hebrew cubit is believed to have been 17.58 inches long; the Greek 18.22 inches; the Roman 17.5 inches; and the Egyptian 20.7 inches."

These revelations may give us all a clearer picture of Noah's Ark. The specifications of this famous vessel (Genesis VI, 15) were:

Length — 300 cubits
Beam — 50 cubits
"Height" — 30 cubits

So, if, for simplicity, we call a cubit 18 inches, she was 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet "high"—a very corpulent vessel. Nelson's *Victory* was only 186 feet long and 52 feet wide. The latest giant, the *United States*, is 990 feet long with a beam of 101½ feet; but the *Ark* was nearly half as long and only 26 feet less wide. Her beam was tremendous: Noah and his men could have played cricket *across* her.

FULL JUSTICE

By "height" (45 feet) we must understand, presumably, "from keel to cabin-top." The *Victory's* poop, the highest point, was 40 feet above the water; she drew 25 feet. If the *Ark* drew, say, 15 feet, the top-deck would be 30 feet above the water. According to Genesis (VII, 20) "fifteen cubits (22.5 feet) upwards did the waters prevail": so she could not safely, navigating over flooded land, with submerged obstacles everywhere, draw much more.

Allowing 8 feet to a deck, you have five decks, 150 yards by 25; and you could get a great many animals into such a space. Do the toy-makers do full justice to this great ship? It is a long time since

this column played with an Ark: but it seems to remember a rather absurd, low, "narrow-gutted" affair. Since Noah, the selected survivor, was almost certainly of British birth, the National Maritime Museum should surely reconstruct and display the *Ark* on a properly noble scale. How much, one wonders, do you care about all this?

DEAD LANGUAGES

Now for the "mile." The word comes, as you know, from the Latin "*mille*," a thousand (which just shows you how "dead" the "dead languages" are). The Roman "*passus*," or pace, did not mean the length of one step, but the "double step, the measure being the distance from the heel of one foot to the heel of the same foot the next time it touched the ground." The Romans reckoned this as 5 Roman *pedes* (feet) "or 4.86 English feet*" (says the Commander). They must have been tidily little fellows: this column does 6 feet easily. But there you are: the mile was *mille passus*, 5000 Roman, or 4858.6 English feet = 1619.5 yards. "This mile was still in use in England in 1639."

SEVERAL CENTURIES

But this, like other early measures, was "local" and accidental: it had nothing to do with the size or shape of the earth. Meanwhile, though, the mariners had been getting about the world and they wanted something more. They wanted, for example, to be able to say how many miles there were in a degree of latitude. For several centuries they went on using the Roman mile, though the number of miles to a degree changed from

* Land-feet, of course

time to time, as they changed their minds about the size of the earth. In Columbus's days they reckoned 56½ Roman miles to a degree; in the sixteenth century it was 70, in the eighteenth it was 75.

About 1637—it's a long story, Uncountable Ones—they decided that the Roman mile was much too short for seamen. "The nautical mile, as distinct from the land mile, might be said to date from this time. Previously, there had been no distinction between the two . . ." (There—you see!) But the expression "nautical mile" did not appear till 1730. It is an excellent, sensible thing: 1 mile of latitude=1 minute (') of latitude, and there are 60 of each to a degree (°). Even now it is not so simple as it sounds, Uncountables, for in theory the nautical, or geographical, mile varies in length according to the

latitude. But "6080 English feet (2026 yards) is adopted as a standard value, this being the appropriate value at Latitude 43° . . ."

INSTEAD OF WHICH

But let us go back. This column does not (as one Uncountable seems to think) complain against the Nautical Mile. No, no, we have here our one approach to a decimal system: 1 fathom=6 feet (2 yards): 100 fathoms=1 "cable" (600 feet) (200 yards): 10 cables=1 mile (as near as damn it); also a measure which fits practically into the cosmos. But what a pity that, having got so far and so well, we didn't abandon the old accidental, illogical, land mile altogether! Instead, we added a little (but not enough) to its length, and made it official. After 1637, says the Commander, "mariners gradually

began to accept the longer mile, while ashore, where there was less incentive to associate the mile with the size of the earth, the old Roman mile of 5000 feet persisted. *The land or statute mile later became 5280 feet (1760 yards) . . .*" But even this learned man does not seem to know when or why (though it is America's mile too), which was our original complaint and query. Someone whispers that "the furlong was raised to correspond with the rood, and so the mile was promoted from 1619 yards to 1760." "And so" is nice: and it may well be so. All this column knows is that if you steam down the Thames from London to the sea, there is one measure of distance on the water and another on the land beside you. Worse, some of the helpful little books give water-distances in nautical miles, and some in land miles—and do not always say which they mean. The "mile" you cover by motor on the Brighton front is 240 yards shorter than the mile covered by the coasting steamer you can see. You can't tell this column that this is a good arrangement. "ONE RACE—ONE MILE" would be a good election cry. But it is too late now perhaps. Any change would interfere with the Derby—and the school sports.

A. P. H.

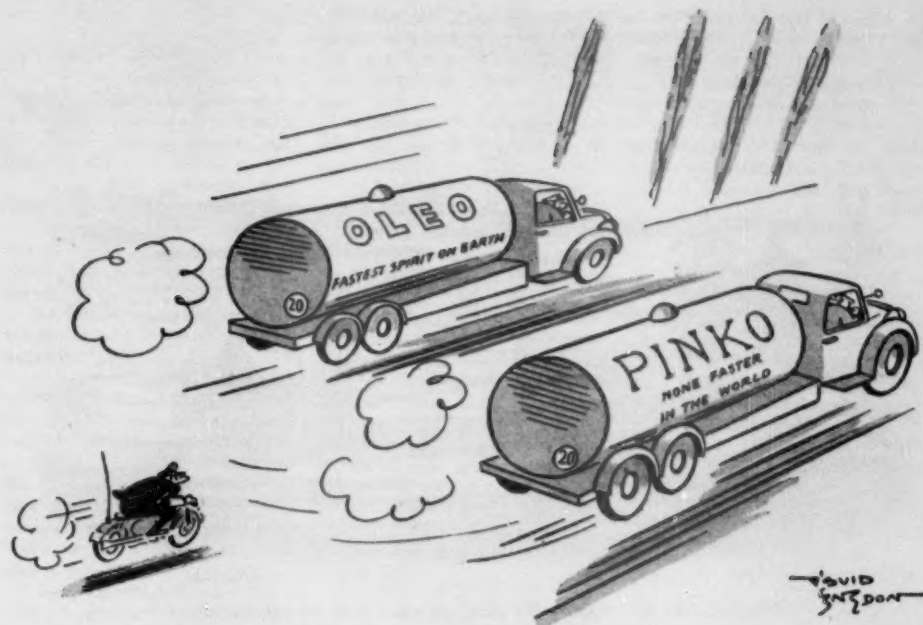


ACT III, SC. I. A FOREST

WITH uncertain fingertips,
doubts, and pullings of the
lips
the trees read the wind's Braille—
and as they read they quail:

Ash, oak, elm, beech, hornbeam
in the Forest of Arden enchanted
lived through the dream
of a midsummer night; but
apprehension numbs
their waking senses and their
pricking thumbs
now plainly warn them that
the tempest comes,
and a winter's tale.

R. C. SCRIVEN



WIND COUNTER WIND

"MUST you keep on blowing the tune through your teeth?" I said to the man behind me at the Proms (or anyway I nearly said it). "Is it absolutely essential that everybody round you should know you've heard the Eroica before? Not that you got that bit right, and anyway I notice you shirk the twiddly bits and bring the high ones down an octave lower.

"I know your kind! Just the sort to pinch all the kudos in the office for a successful bit of work, you having been away on sick leave when the real hard sloggling went on. Sick leave? I wonder. More likely French. And when you have a genuine cold, you're not the sort to take it decently to bed. You'd be the one to breathe it over everybody else as you're doing with Beethoven's tune... Never a thought for anybody else... I bet you galumph upstairs two steps at a time. Yes, I'm sure of it now. Anybody could tell, the way you're bounding up that arpeggio through

your teeth. Bounding's the word for it. Then you clump down again without putting your slippers on properly, so that it sounds like a coal bucket being kicked downstairs. I bet you slam the bathroom door. And I suppose you go on with that fearful breathing in your bath, wallowing in eighteen inches of very hot water so that the tap runs cold for the next person before he's even had time to take up the nail brush. Or would have taken it up if you hadn't put it 'by mistake' in your dressing-gown pocket. (And what a dressing-gown! Red with emerald lozenges which no sensitive person could face in the early morning.)

"If you go on like this over Beethoven," I said (at least I almost said it), "what a bore you must be at meals, informing everybody *ex cathedra* about all the other things you think you're the only person who knows anything about and not caring whether the other people want to hear about them or

not. I can just hear you crunching the toast and telling everybody that 'statistics in America show that disregard of contragravitational precautions at supersonic speeds cause disintegration of the human frame from wind velocity.' Oh, could but the human frame disintegrate from wind velocity through the teeth!"

"I'm sorry, madam," I said to the woman in front. "If I'd known I was beating time on your back with my dispatch case I would—"

A boorish *shush!* from the man behind drowned the final bars of the Scherzo.

CONFOUND that man

I asked to dine;

He neither

Nor

dropped a line.



Sillence

"What's it like in? Blimey—it's quicksand apart from the top six inches!"

SOUTH KENSINGTON

A daydream inspired by the delicious pause which the Inner Circle train always makes in South Kensington Station; more particularly in the afternoon

In Kensington,
 South Kensington,
 The lotus blooms along the road,
 The sunken road,
 The iron road;
 And as the dragons pause and run
 And pause, reclining in the sun,
 In Kensington,
 South Kensington,
 We in each scarlet dragon's womb
 Sit, as the drooping summer sun
 Glows in our temporary abode
 All the eternal afternoon:
 In Kensington,
 South Kensington,
 The soft and sleepy summer sun
 Glows as the lotus-sunshine glow'd
 For Tennyson,
 Lord Tennyson,
 When thro' a golden summer reign
 Victoria and Albert won
 For Kensington,
 South Kensington,
 The glories of the human hand,
 The treasures of the human brain,
 And wafted them to Lotus-land

In Kensington,
 South Kensington;
 That we may come and dream away
 The long unhasting afternoon,
 Exchanging our red dragon's womb
 For that great shrine,
 that artful tomb
 In Kensington,
 South Kensington,
 Where all the treasures of Cathay,
 Of Hindustan and Italy,
 And ebony with pearl inlay
 Enable us to dream away
 The lotus-long sweet afternoon
 With Tennyson,
 Lord Tennyson;
 Fetch'd in a warm and scarlet womb,
 Lapp'd in a gold encrusted tomb,
 Dreaming the older days again
 In Happy Araby or Spain,
 Till, with the dropping of the sun,
 The dragon carries us away
 From Kensington,
 South Kensington,
 To cast us on a harsher strand,
 Far from the coast of Lotus-land.

NEXT SUMMER

"NO, no, that will never do!" said Mr. Henderson. "That's no way to use a bucket and spade..."

"Look out!" screamed Mrs. Henderson.

The black shadow of a jet aircraft swept across the beach. Timothy dropped his spade and clapped his hands over his ears.

Mr. Henderson scrambled to his feet and tried to wipe damp sand from his blazer.

"All right," he said, "no need to panic. Get on with it, Timmy. You haven't got all day, you know!"

The boy resumed his digging. Mrs. Henderson watched him adoringly through her sun-glasses for a few minutes and then returned with Hercule Poirot to the corpse in the library.

The beach was crowded. Colourful family groups with gay parasols, portable radios, luncheon baskets, beach balls and dispensaries of suntan oils and lotions dotted the ribbon of sand between the shingle and the sea. It was a beautiful day.

Three jets swooped out to sea, turned gracefully and roared in over the holiday-makers. This time Mrs. Henderson did not look up from her book.

"Two hundred feet at least," said Henderson. He looked at his watch and then at his son. "You've only got another twenty minutes, Tim. Better get a move on if you want it finished in time."

"Why don't you help him, Arthur?" said Mrs. Henderson. "You know you're itching to!"

"No, it's something he's got to learn for himself. The prize doesn't matter. After all, he's got plenty of..."

Henderson shouted unavailingly as a sudden thunderous growl filled the sky. A jet streaked in low and the people on the beach threw themselves flat on the sands.

"My!" said Mrs. Henderson. "That was a close shave. I could see the flames quite clearly."

"Nonsense," said Henderson, examining a patch of oil on the left knee of his flannels, "a miss is as good as a mile. Hello! What's that!"

A new sound, a low atmospheric crackling, had been added to the cacophony.

"Listen! There's going to be an announcement," said Henderson.

"Hello, folks!" The voice, friendly and avuncular, came from the row of loud-speakers fixed to tall posts above the sea wall. "Hello, folks! It is my pleasure and privilege to inform you that to-day's guest-star is none other than that brilliant and beautiful star of stage, screen and radio, Miss Thelma Lodestone (*Cheers*). Miss Lodestone and the mayor are about to judge to-day's entries in our great beach competition. If you are entering, please let one of the beach-guards know. They'll be with you in ten minutes, so look for their scarlet blazers. Thank you!"

"Goodness," said Mrs. Henderson, "you'd better hurry, Tim. Ten minutes!"

Henderson eased himself from the deck-chair and began to dig.

Five minutes later the hole was finished and Tim and his father stood up to admire it. There were similar holes all over the beach. Everybody waited for the scarlet blazers.

"How is it, ma?" said Timothy.

"It's very good, dear, and I shouldn't be surprised if you won a prize. Mind you, I don't think they're as nice as the sand castles we used to build in my day."

"But they're much more useful, ma."

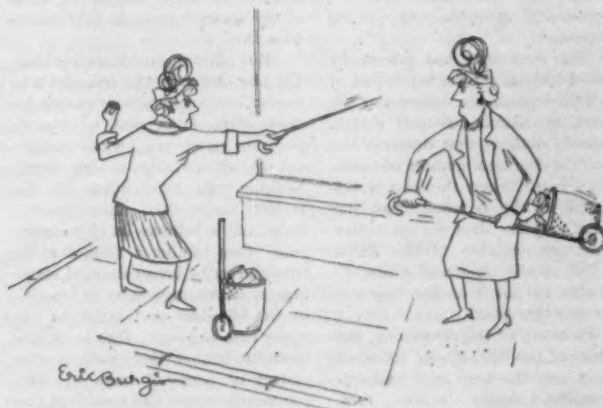
"Exactly," said Henderson. "It wouldn't be much fun going to the seaside, would it, if we didn't know how to dig fox-holes?"

A jet circled the palace at the end of the pier and came in low, hurtling towards the sands.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

THE ALLITERATIVE DODO

WHAT can I do, the Dodo asked,
Before I quit the scene—
Where worldly triumphs were so few—
To keep my memory green!
Whereto the gods replied: Good Bird!
The roads to Fame are many,
And dying—with a name like yours—
As good a one as any!





"Of course we need irrigation canals more, but Pharaoh promised the electors Pyramids."

FIELD DRESSING

WHAT—it is going to be asked soon round many a committee-room table—are Rugby's newest fashions for the field to be? And the player himself, now that the season is about to start, will be well-advised to make sure that his appearance measures up to his prowess.

The man who has previously prided himself on the smartness of his nether garments will eschew the flared, or diamond-shaped shorts. There is nothing that deserves the covert and critical glances of teammates more, when the bag is unpacked in the pavilion, than last season's styles. And the up-to-now permanent member of the Extra B XV should, first and foremost, examine his kit if he has hopes of A status this year.

To many of the discerning, the feature of the Springboks' tour last season was the very new bathing-trunk-like shorts which they favoured for all their more fashion-

able games—shorts cut with a distinctive small triangle at the hem which was not merely ornamental but useful, since it prevented that annoying ruche in the line-out. There's certain to be a great number of these shorts on most of the smarter grounds everywhere soon.

But shorts aren't everything. The slimmer man who has—let's be candid—rather carelessly chosen his club, often finds that he has to play in a jersey with colours not at all suitable to his build. Nothing can look worse on the svelter figure than unimaginative hues; and it behoves us all to make sure, when joining a club, that its colours run to broad decided stripings, so that a suggestion of breadth to the shoulder and bulge to the upper arm is given. One is, unfortunately, rather tied down in the matter of personal taste by silly convention when one considers the jersey itself. Shoulder pads are not

really worth while for the rougher matches, although they add a pleasing impression of bulk, too; and most committees rather frown on individual idiosyncrasy in the matter of *additional*s—perhaps the thin line of braid round the collar, or the adding of one's own initials over the heart.

Speaking of colours, the rather vexed question of scrum caps in distinctive shades is sure to come up again. The bolder or more active forward favours the idea; more conservative opinion inclines to the view that these caps would be almost too distinctive—especially in the last quarter of an hour—and those of us who have honestly given up hope of being invited to take part in representative games will probably come down heavily on the side of as little ostentation as possible.

Mittens? Well . . . perhaps for the more formal matches.

FERGUSON MACLAY

at the PLAY

Affairs of State (CAMBRIDGE)—*The Comedy of Errors* (ROYAL COURT THEATRE CLUB)

ONE objection to modern V.I.P.s is that one expects them to behave as such, even in plays. *Affairs of State* begins on the highest level with telephone badinage between an ex-Secretary of State and Mr. Truman, and includes a present Secretary of State and an Under-Secretary, the fourth male member of its cast being a butler mercifully free from political ambition. It also contains long passages about American electoral gambits which may have seemed very droll in New York but which, even after the recent circus in Chicago, must be fairly incomprehensible to a British audience. But, apart from giving the Under-Secretary an opportunity for the age-old choice between a career and a woman, all this grandeur is entirely by the way; for *Affairs of State* is no more than a very simple game of marital chess, so simple indeed that one is always expecting the board to be overturned by some impatient knee.

Finding that his young wife is in love with a climbing politician, a wily old gentleman first knocks a rung out of the ladder and then persuades his friend that as a bachelor he cannot hope to be clasped to the throbbing heart of America. He implants the idea of a façade marriage on strictly business lines, and when his niece accepts the job goes to work to substitute passion for a cold-blooded contract. As his niece already adores the politician, and blossoms over-night from a trim school-teacher into a determined

minx, this is not difficult. Unfortunately one cannot believe a word of it, and in a rather stately comedy this still matters. Particularly incredible is the fact that an allegedly astute young man should ever embark on so preposterous an enterprise; and nearly as absurd is the final behaviour of the plotter's wife—a considerable tiger-cat—

Anouilh's "Le Bal des Voleurs." The streets of Ephesus, gone provincially French, flow with the comic figures one might have watched from a café table about 1910; and once this is accepted, what more natural than for the native *Antipholus* and his twin from Syracuse to be dressed in morning coats and grey top-hats? Or for Mr. ERNEST MILTON's



Philip Russell—Mr. WILFRED HYDE WHITE

George Henderson—Mr. HUGH WILLIAMS

Irene Elliott—Miss JOYCE REDMAN

who suddenly pulls in her claws and says, in effect, "Bless you, my children!" thus giving an unconvincing story a flatly artificial end.

Mr. LOUIS VERNEUIL's mild wit is at its happiest in the girl's early relations with her employer. The only interesting character, she is played altogether delightfully by Miss JOYCE REDMAN. Miss CORAL BROWNE, Mr. WILFRED HYDE WHITE, Mr. HUGH WILLIAMS and Mr. AUSTIN TREVOR steam smoothly through easy waters, their routes efficiently charted by Mr. ROY RICH.

orotund Duke, stepping straight from the pages of Ronald Firbank, to be waylaid by a relentless photographer? All the business of mistaken identity, taken at great pace, is made funnier than usual, thanks to lively performances by Mr. JOHN VAN EYSEN and Mr. DONALD ECCLES as the twin masters, remarkably alike. Mr. CECIL WINTER makes a charming *Ageon*, Miss PATRICIA BURKE a fiery *Adriana*, and Mr. JOHN GARLEY's cockney *Dromio of Syracuse* shows himself a forceful quick comedian. Good mime begins and ends the evening.

Recommended

The Millionairess (New), weak Shaw galvanized by Katharine Hepburn. *Sweet Madness* (Vaudeville), a psycho-analytical frolic. *The Globe Revue* (Globe), which deserves a good dinner first.

ERIC KEOWN



The Duke of Ephesus—
Mr. ERNEST MILTON

at the PICTURES

Affair in Trinidad—Just for You

THERE seems to be pretty general agreement to say that *Affair in Trinidad* (Director: VINCENT SHERMAN) is "RITA HAYWORTH's come-back picture" and to discuss it mainly from that point of view. To be sure, it isn't worthy of a great deal of notice from any other; one might call it a fairly routine tropical thriller, rather on the same lines as the recent *Macao*—and yet some-

what might be as flat and usual a thriller as was ever hashed up; but this one has, besides RITA HAYWORTH, some entertaining dialogue and what I'm inclined to regard as a "twist"—the fact that the police involved are, of course, British, with their well-known tendency to blunder bull-headedly about in a murder mystery and their gauche lack of consideration for a lovely woman's feelings. In this last characteristic they are not alone, for GLENN FORD, as the murdered man's brother, spends the greater part of the picture treating the heroine with a boorish suspicion seldom met with in anyone so plainly marked out as the hero. That too, in fact—as an unusual point—has its effect in holding one's attention. Miss HAYWORTH does two spectacular song-and-dance numbers and performs very creditably in her straight dramatic and emotional scenes. Such scenes in this sort of story seldom call for great acting, but they do call for a skill and imagination by no means often found among people who can sing and dance like Miss HAYWORTH. An unimportant film, but quite good value.

pieces, wherein the most intricate impromptu movements go exactly right and in time. The musical set pieces are, in fact, the best of the film, for the story is that uneasy business about the father who is out of touch with his children. There is—if you have any taste at all for light music—a captivating ease, power and relaxed skill about such elaborate numbers as the opening one. There is also some highly attractive design in colour—mostly at one remove, in pictures of stage design. But as for the narrative framework, much of that, candidly, has to be just sat through.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

In London, and also among the releases, is *Operation Svalloe*, a fine Norwegian documentary (with English commentary) telling straightforwardly the tremendous story of the destruction of the heavy-water plant captured by Hitler in Norway.

Other releases: the good quiet, mining picture *The Brave Don't Cry* (3/9/52), the new Bob Hope *Son of Paleface* (13/8/52), and *Ivanhoe* (25/6/52). RICHARD MALLETT



Just for You
Carolina Hill—JANE WYMAN

how or other I lost interest quite soon in *Macao*, whereas *Affair in Trinidad* kept me reasonably well entertained throughout its length. The reason for this can hardly have been the story itself, which rings a number of mostly familiar changes on entirely familiar ingredients: the spy ring, the sleek international financier who holds it together, the innocent prevailed on to work with the police, and the resultant misunderstandings ("You've got to trust me, I just can't tell you"), the hidden listener at the crooks' conclave, the pursuits, the fights . . . and all the rest of the old well-worn situations. Add that the heroine is (guess what!) a "night-club entertainer" and you have the recipe for

Just for You (Director: ELLIOTT NUGENT) is one of those thoroughly old-fashioned musicals that conform to all the wearisome rules. For one thing the title (as must be pretty obvious) means nothing and has no connection with the subject of the picture, being merely the title of the song that is used for a climax. For another, the principal character (BING CROSSBY) is a song-writer, and furthermore so is his son; and he is a theatrical producer as well as a performer, which means that all the musical numbers can be introduced as stage performances—on the usual acres of stage—or rehearsals for stage performances. Or as try-outs on the piano (reinforced by orchestra as soon as the audience is judged to be spellbound enough not to notice) of songs just written; or as party



Affair in Trinidad
Chris Emery—RITA HAYWORTH



Booking Office



Churchill, No. 5

Closing The Ring. Winston S. Churchill. Cassell, 30/-

OPENING with the defeat of the U-boats in the Atlantic and closing with the D Day Armada setting out for Normandy, *Closing the Ring* takes us enthrallingly from June 1943 to June 1944. For Hitler the clouds were at last banking up darkly, yet for the Allies it was a time of strategical uncertainty. In spite of the close friendship between Mr. Churchill and the President—perhaps the biggest single factor in our victory—considerable divisions began to appear over military policy both in Europe and the East. After the surrender of Italy Mr. Churchill, with an eye on Turkey and the route to the Black Sea, wished to clean up the Aegean Islands and, so far as possible without prejudice to the invasion of France, engage the Germans more strenuously in Italy and keep them worried by amphibious operations. The American Chiefs of Staff, however, were shy of any enterprise in Europe which might faintly shadow the chances of "Overlord"; their plans remained rigid where in Mr. Churchill's view a little flexibility would have brought quick prizes. The success of the Italian campaign was threatened by a tight schedule of withdrawals for "Overlord"; shipping was the main shortage, and in particular tank-landing craft. And Hitler (whose squandering of his forces in Italy and the Balkans is criticized in this volume as the creation of a spider's web in which, for the final issue, the spider had been forgotten) decided in October 1943 to fight the Italian battle to the death. In the end Mr. Churchill got pretty well what he wanted, but not before precious opportunities had been lost. He writes sadly of the "dull, dead-weight resistance . . . I had encountered about all Mediterranean projects."

But differences of opinion—such as that over the Mediterranean command, which he successfully insisted should remain British—that were bound to develop in so vital a year never affected the cordial relations that ran from top to bottom. After the Quebec Conference Mr. Churchill, in the President's absence, enjoyed the singular privilege of taking the chair in the White House at a meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff; and on the eve of D Day, reporting to Mr. Roosevelt on the good relations between the armies, he cabled "Here certainly it is an absolute brotherhood."

Stalin, referred to variously in the telegrams as "Uncle Joe," "Bruin" and "The Great Bear," was already growing more intransigent. Mr. Churchill's refusal to accept an offensive message from him about convoys made a healthy impression; earlier he had minuted General Ismay "Experience has taught me that it is not worth while arguing with Soviet people. One simply has to confront them with the new fact and await their reactions." At Teheran, apart from a

gruesome leg-pull—if such it was—for which Stalin apologized, the two got on well. The Teheran record shows that, whatever legend may say, the Prime Minister's constant pleas for freer action in the Mediterranean were always subject to the supreme claims of "Overlord."

On the side-lines during this period were the question of how far Badoglio and the Italian King could be usefully retained, the crises in Greece and Yugoslavia, the measures to meet the secret weapons, and of course the continued touchiness of De Gaulle. But even the capture of Rome was overshadowed by the mighty operation impending in France. Reading the chapters in which the preparations are described one marvels again that so vast a plan should have worked so smoothly. Mr. Churchill abandoned his intention of watching the naval bombardment from a cruiser only at the urgent request of the King, who wished to go himself but reluctantly decided that neither of them was justified in running such a risk.

Some, and I am with them, will think Mussolini too generously assessed, but this instalment carries its great story forward superbly, in Mr. Churchill's unique combination of the grand manner and that of the man in the street. Among all these heavy problems he still had time for humour and the humanities. Collectors of his minutes will find treasures expressing fury at petty prosecutions, anxiety about the shortage of playing-cards, and shock at the style of a general on whom he urges Fowler's "Modern English Usage."

ERIC KEOWN

Steamboat Gothic. Frances Parkinson Keyes. Eyre and Spottiswoode, 12/6

Here at last is a novel that panders neither to the lowbrow nor to the highbrow! Mrs. Keyes tells an enthralling story and tells it superbly. *Steamboat Gothic* goes its own way with the massive impulse of the big Mississippi packets of the 'sixties; and so does Clyde Batchelor, who is a cross between the



Mayor of Casterbridge and one of Bret Harte's good-hearted Californian gamblers. His shady antecedents and his method of extricating himself from them are in the American style of the period; but these are behind him when the book opens and he is on the point of buying Cindy Lou—a Louisiana variant of St. Cloud—to install his bride, a Southern widow who knows nothing of his disreputable past. He adopts his impoverished Lucy's two children; and their difficult temperaments, Lucy's steadfast faith, and his own dread of the past overtaking the future, dominate a canvas whose crowded background adds its own completing touch of vitality.

H. P. E.

Old Towns Revisited. Arthur Oswald. *Country Life*, 21/-

The eight market towns here studied—Abingdon, Berwick-on-Tweed, Bewdley, Blandford, Farnham (Surrey), Richmond (Yorks), Totnes and Wisbech—have it in common that they were by-passed by the stream of nineteenth-century progress and so preserved much of their individual character and the local idiom of their architecture and craftsmanship. The historical notes and architectural commentaries by Mr. Oswald, assisted by Mr. Christopher Hussey (Bewdley and Farnham) and Mr. John Fleming (Berwick), help us to an understanding of the backgrounds, while the experienced *Country Life* photographers present their subjects so that the detail of the surprisingly many gracious buildings can be profitably studied. The most interesting chapter for those who have a concern

for the preservation of our treasures is that on Farnham. In that charming old country town an enlightened business man and a zealous architect carried through a notable work of restoration and preservation—a fine example of civic virtue.

J. P. T.

This Crooked Way. Elizabeth Spencer. *Gollancz*, 12/6

A novel demanding full concentration from its readers, particularly if they are English, is *This Crooked Way*. Amos Dudley, born in a hard-up, hard-working American family, where the Baptist faith is a ruling factor in life, is obsessed with fear of the Judgment; he has his own strange religious experiences. He leaves home, gets land, falls in love with a daughter of the uncoroneted aristocracy of the Delta, who finally marries him in pique. Their lives are marred by her inherited attitude, and his callousness, to other people's rights and wrongs. It is vividly told, not because it is full of detail but because that detail is unerringly chosen; Dudley's consciousness of accountability at a higher than human level adds to its strength and power. Brilliant it is; but different readers may extract differing stories from it, and even the dust-jacket's blurb may not seem a faithful précis to all of them.

B. E. S.

SHORTER NOTES

Street Music. Theodora Koogh. *Peter Davies*, 11/6. Another sinister tale of delinquent adolescence by the author of "Meg." American wife of French music critic settles in Parisian slum and fights a strange war against her husband's past and his present involvement with a child drug-peddler. The nightmare atmosphere, the grotesque characters, the piercing intuitions of human separateness and connection strike unused chords of fear in the reader. Brilliant, horrifying and odd.

Monastic Sites from the Air. David Knowles and J. K. St. Joseph. *Cambridge University Press*, 55/-. Handsome quarto with admirable air-photographs of 128 monastic sites in Great Britain—the buildings in various stages of disintegration (or conversion to secular use). The plane's-eye view reveals at a glance details of plan, elevation and structure, including readable traces of features now buried. Expert interpretation, with historical notes by Dom David Knowles.

Majority: 1931-1952. An Anthology of 21 Years of Publishing. *Hamish Hamilton*, 25/-. Huge but attractively produced volume containing in 1000 pages two full-length novels (*The Pursuit of Love* and Camus's *The Outsider*), two plays (*The Browning Version* and Sartre's *In Camera*), long and short stories by Thurber, Bemelmans, Salinger and others, groups of poems by Paul Dehn and Kathleen Raine, *The Unquiet Grave* complete with a new preface, and many long self-contained passages from books by Koestler, Gunther, Nicolson, Shaw, Brogan and fifteen others. At to-day's prices, staggering value.

A Doctor's Pilgrimage. Edmund A. Brasset, M.D. *Harrop*, 12/6. The self-told story of a Nova Scotian doctor who wanted to become a brain surgeon, went into general practice to acquire the means thereto, and found in the end that conscious patients, if less remunerative, had more appeal than the impersonalities of the operating theatre. Mildly sentimental and facetious, but interesting and very easy to read.

Mister Jelly Roll. Alan Lomax. *Cassell*, 18/-. The life story of Ferdinand (Jelly Roll) Morton, the tiger-ragamuffin of New Orleans who became one of the kings of jazz. Based on Morton's celebrated Library of Congress recordings ("My folks were all Frenchmans . . . and so on and so forth"), admirably documented and illustrated; a "must" for all jazzmen and students of folk music.

The Apple Tree. Daphne du Maurier. *Gollancz*, 10/6. The title story is a study in horror—a man who had grown to hate his dead wife sees her likeness in a tree that he cannot destroy. The same macabre element taints the four other long stories, and though the short novel has suspense and beauty, there is also a sinister twist.



HNCE VN RGTS

THE other day the Post Office delivered safely to me a letter posted sixteen days before twenty-five miles away. Stamped on the front of the envelope in purple ink were the words

Head Postmaster
RGTS DELAY

The fact that the letter covered a rejected manuscript may have increased my bitterness; but I am still upset by the curtness of the Head Postmaster's apology. No space had been saved by the abbreviation. I will not go into details of measurement; the original, like those of the letters written by sun-bronzed pipe-smokers, may be inspected at my office. Failing such inspection (as the Head Postmaster would no doubt say), you must take my word for it. No space, I repeat, had been saved; and even if it had, it was my space, not his. It was my envelope.

Three rubber letters and a corresponding amount of purple ink had been saved for the nation. But if the Post Office is really in such straits, other possible economies leap to the mind. This is where the man really gives himself away. He had four words in front of him. Faced with the necessity, no doubt brought home to him by the Chancellor's speech in the Commons, of making a cut somewhere, what does the surly fellow do? The first two words are his own title. To me, *Hd Postmr* is at least intelligible and even not without a certain sibilant charm. But not to him. By not so much as a letter will he derogate from his dignity. So the words stand in full. The fourth word, DELAY, is, in the circumstances, the barest statement of fact; he might well have said GRS INFFNCY. Moreover, it does not easily admit of abbreviation. DELY is well known to mean "delivery"; and although, from his hesitation, it might be thought that the Head Postmaster did in fact rgt having to deliver the letter at all; he could not, on the face of it, admit such rgt. DLY means "daily." Such rgts

may be, and indeed very likely are, a regular feature of the Head Postmaster's working life, but this also you cannot, knowing him as you now do, expect him to admit. DELAY is just intelligible, but has the unfortunate appearance of being a mistake or piece of reformed spelling; it does not look like an abbreviation; and it was the effect of brevity he was after, not brevity itself. So it is on the third word that the axe falls.

But all this is, in fact, to flatter him. The truth is that he hates having to apologize at all, and will do so in the curtest possible way. RGTS is a stiff-necked nod where he ought to have grovelled.

I may have misunderstood him to his harm. RGTS may mean something else. *Head Postmaster right delay* suggests a dramatic top-level intervention to remedy an injustice perpetrated by subordinate officials. (They may have been passing my manuscript round among themselves for days until sternly ordered by the Chief to give it up.) This would make a good headline, but does not

seem convincing as a personal message. Other interpretations, such as *reinvestigate* or *regenerate*, are interesting but far-fetched. The only remaining possibility is that some full-stops have been left out, or worn flat on the stamp in dly use. The interpretations here are limited only by the ingenuity of the recipient. It might be *Head Postmaster really grieved to see delay*. Or it might be an Agony-Column blend of the personal and the telegraphic: *Head Postmaster, real gentleman, truly sorry delay*.

But I don't think so. I don't think I have been unduly sensitive in feeling myself rebuked. The fact is, I know I am lucky to have got the letter at all; I know we are all lucky to get all our letters, even the rejected manuscripts. But most of all I know I am lucky to have a Head Postmaster who can step down from his desk, all fourteen letters of him, and share my little joys and sorrows. Like the Head Postmaster's stamp, my experience leaves little room for regrets.

P. M. HUBBARD



GORGEOUS AUGUSTUS

"**T**RUTH in advertising—here it is. 'It's not every man who can afford in these days a separate suit for every occasion.'"

"It's not every man who can afford in these days a separate suit for any occasion. The different parts of suits wear out at different rates. I have four waistcoats, but can't match one of them with a coat and trousers."

"You have coats and trousers?"

"I have coats, and I have trousers. What I do not have is coats and trousers as a pair. I have my painting coat—in which I must not go out in the garden, my gardening coat—in which I am not admitted into the house, my coat for the house—in which I am forbidden to go to the office, and my coat for the office—which I am advised not to wear at home."

"You have trousers also, you said?"

"I don't wear a kilt. I have my trousers for when I am out but not when I'm in, my trousers for when I am in but not when I'm out, my trousers I may come in in if I don't stop, and my trousers I may stop in in if I don't sit down. The first ones are my trousers for the office, the second ones are my trousers for the house, the third ones are my gardening trousers and the last ones are my painting trousers."

"On normal standards, of course, you're a stage behind all along the line. The least you should do in the office is wear clothes that match. In the house you ought to be dressed so that you could leave it—imagine if one day you had a fire. In the garden your clothes should be clean, even if they are odd. And when you

are painting I don't see how you can assume that when you want to sit down you will be able to go out in the garden—and not wear your coat. It's like this advertisement. 'Here,' it says, 'is a suit which, though a country suit, will proclaim you as a well-dressed man even on visits to town.' At the office you are a well-dressed man for the house. In the house you are wearing clothes one would expect to find you in in the garden. In the garden the things you've got on are suitable for painting. And when you go painting I gather that you are all dolled up in what another man would throw away. Have you no clothes in which you could participate in an activity for which the onlookers could regard you as suitably dressed?"

"There are my tails, in which I could go to a Russian wedding. But then I should have to go as the bride—my wife has had them converted into a coat and skirt."

G. A. C. WITHERIDGE



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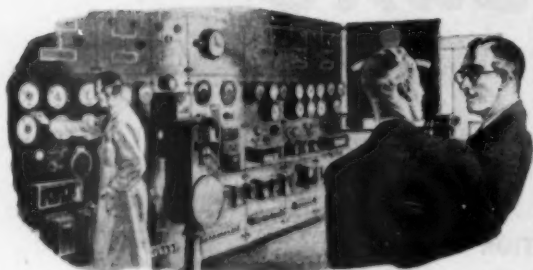


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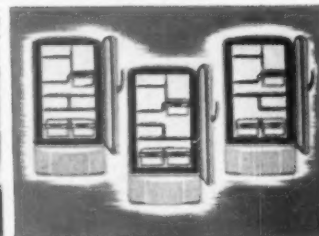
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Grouchy grammarian declines "irregularity"



Poor old Erasmus. Once he was the best syntax-collector in the business. Now he's like a subject without an object. "Hail," I said. "Served any long sentences lately?" "Nothing but bad language," rasped Erasmus. "If I don't find something for this constipation of mine, I shall become a past participle. Figuratively, I feel like a smoked-out pipe."

"Literally," I said, "a pipe is the trouble."

"?" said Erasmus, with inverted eyebrows.

"The pipe I mean," I said, "is the one you have inside you. It's 30 ft. long, and your intestinal muscles have to pull everything you eat through it. But, nowadays, when we eat mostly soft, starchy food, they have nothing to grip on, and their punctuation breaks down."

"What happens then?" asked Erasmus, parenthetically.

"A bad case of catalectic anacoluthon," I said, "caused by a full-stop in your colon. The net result is constipation, and you become the victim of all the irreg-

ular verbs. What you need," I said, "is bulk."

"No more medicines for me!" pouted Erasmus.

"Agreed," I said. "You'll give your system all the bulk it needs simply by having All-Bran for breakfast every morning. You'll like it a lot, and it'll soon make you 'regular.'"

"I wish I were sure," said Erasmus, submissively.

I was, of course; and when I met Erasmus a week later, wearing a grin like a split infinitive, I said: "So you feel better, eh?"

"I do, indeed," declared Erasmus. "That marvellous All-Bran made me 'regular' in four days! Does everybody know how good it is?"

"That," I said, "is a rhetorical question."

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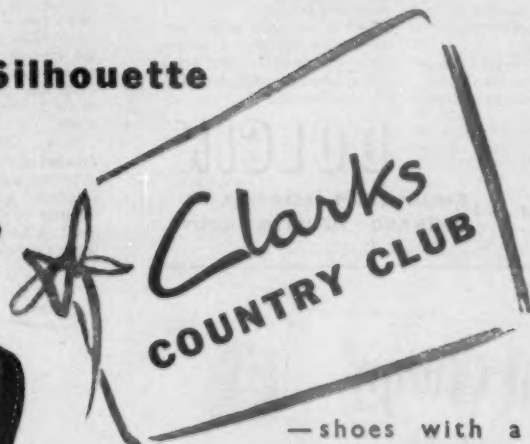
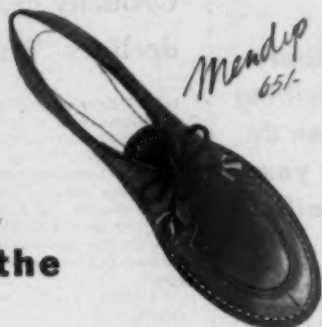
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Sherry-

and the

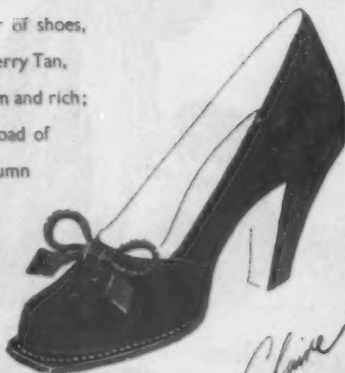
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Bedale: Hawthorn Red, Cognac Brown, and Black Calf.
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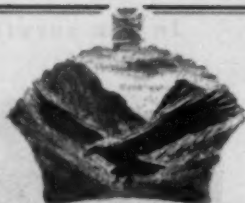
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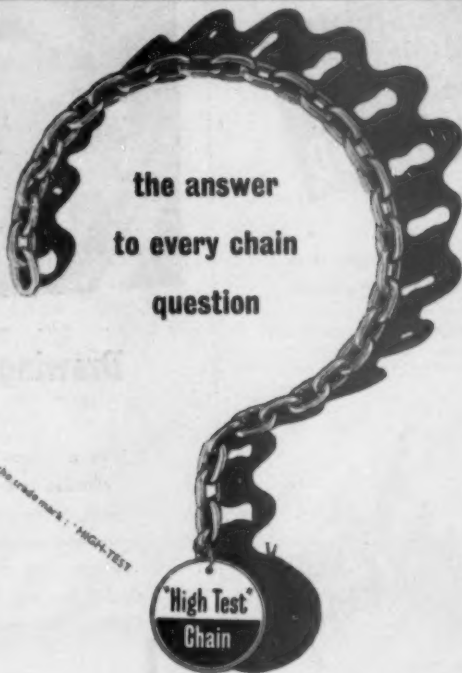
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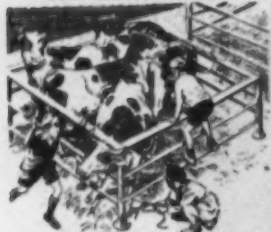
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HOW do you choose wine? Do you go by the foreign language on the label or do you know enough about wine to judge it on its merits?

Here's how experts judge wine. They hold it up to the light: its colour is a guide to its maturity. They "breathe-in" its bouquet: its aroma is as important as fragrance is to a flower. They take a sip and savour it on their palates: flavour and "character" are the final points. By all these tests, experts, with the world's wines to choose from, have awarded gold medals to a wine with a label in English—SEPPELTS IMPERIAL RESERVE PARA.

Here's the story behind this wine. Just over a hundred years ago, Joseph Seppelt, a Silesian with wine-making in his blood, arrived in Australia. There he discovered the wine country of his dreams—with all the good features of the finest vineyards of home, and none

of their drawbacks. The soil was rich, the climate dry, the sunshine certain; and phylloxera (the vine pest which ravaged European vineyards) did not exist. He imported prize European vines, planted them and founded Seppeltsfield.

Today, the fourth generation of the Seppelt family is making wine in the vineyards Joseph Seppelt planted in 1851—vineyards which are now older than many in Europe. With the tradition of a hundred years of wine-making behind them, in a pest-free land where every year is a vintage year, Seppelts wines—notably IMPERIAL RESERVE PARA—challenge comparison with the finest from any country. "Port" in all but name (IMPERIAL RESERVE PARA cannot be called Port because it does not come from Portugal) this fine wine, tawny in colour, light-bodied and clean in flavour, with a character bordering on that of a liqueur, is the accompaniment to dessert sought after by wine lovers who know.

Among the wine stores which sell SEPPELTS IMPERIAL RESERVE PARA are Selfridges, Whiteleys, Bentalls of Kingston, branches of the Victoria Wine Co., Ltd., Thresher & Co., Ltd., Empire Wine Stores, and other good wine merchants, whose numbers are growing daily. The price of 17/9 is, thanks to Imperial Preference, lower than European wine of comparable quality.

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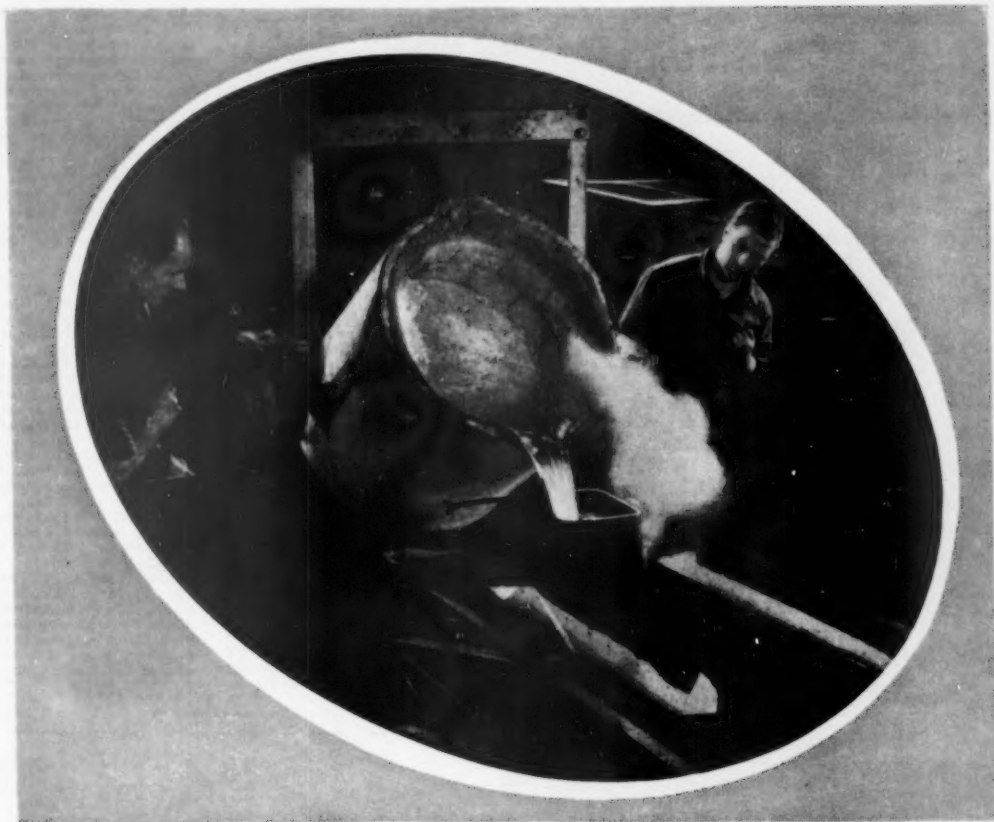
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